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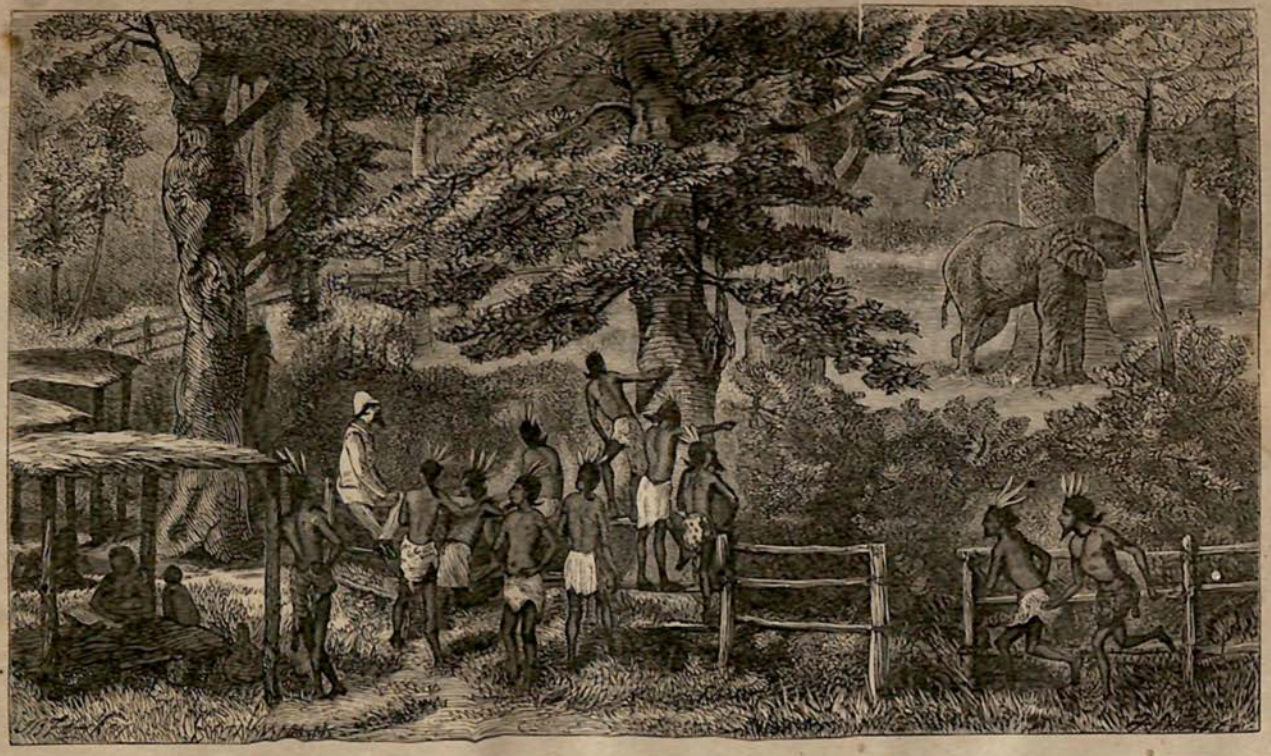
THE

AFRICAN SKETCH-BOOK

VOL. I.



"The more I looked, the more I was surprised. Here was a great wild elephant, who paid no more attention to us than a cow in a field to people looking over a hedge."

Front.

THE

AFRICAN SKETCH-BOOK

BY

WINWOOD READE

56819

WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

LONDON
SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 51 WATERLOO PLACE
1873

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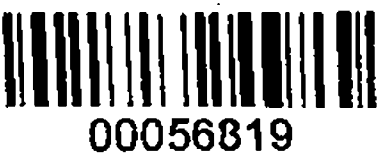
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PREFACE

THIS WORK contains a brief recapitulation of my previously published travels in Equatorial Africa, Angola, and Senegambia during 1862 and a part of 1863; essays on the slave trade, African exploration, and the progress of Islam in Negroland; several tales intended to illustrate the manners and customs of the natives; and, finally, my recent travels.

In 1868 I visited Africa a second time, spent some months on the Gold Coast and Slave Coast, and then made a ten months' exploring journey from Sierra Leone, opening a new country and obtaining important geographical results. I also made two trips to the backwoods of Liberia, which is almost unwritten ground, and carefully studied the Negro Republic. I returned home in 1870, having passed two years on the coast or in the interior, industriously working, with my note-book always in my

hand, and engaged in no other pursuit but that of collecting information. If, therefore, I have introduced the tales, essays, and *résumé* of previous travels, mentioned above, it has not been from want of material, but from a desire to render this work comprehensive and complete. It is not only a narrative of travel I offer to the public, but a sketch-book of African life; and though the texture of the work is light, the labour bestowed upon it has been immense. Since my return from the coast, in 1863, I have never ceased to study African literature; and, setting aside my three years' travels in that country, I have devoted to the perusal of African books as much time and toil as most men devote to the study of a profession. If all the extracts I have made with a view to this work were to be printed, they would equal in bulk the common-place book of Buckle, recently published. I enter into these personal details, as readers are apt to suppose that if a book of this kind is light it cannot be solid; and I therefore give these facts as my credentials. Eleven years I have studied Africa: three years from the life and eight years from books.

The tales contain much material drawn both from books and from life, but are otherwise entirely ficti-

tious. I must beg to observe that no fiction exists outside the tales; my narrative of travel is true, every word, and, like most true narratives, does not abound in startling incidents or remarkable adventures.

I hope to have many lady readers, and therefore reserve for a future publication much matter of a purely scientific nature. In a popular work the manners and customs of a savage people cannot be fully described; and many problems of importance for the Science of Man are not yet interesting to the public at large.

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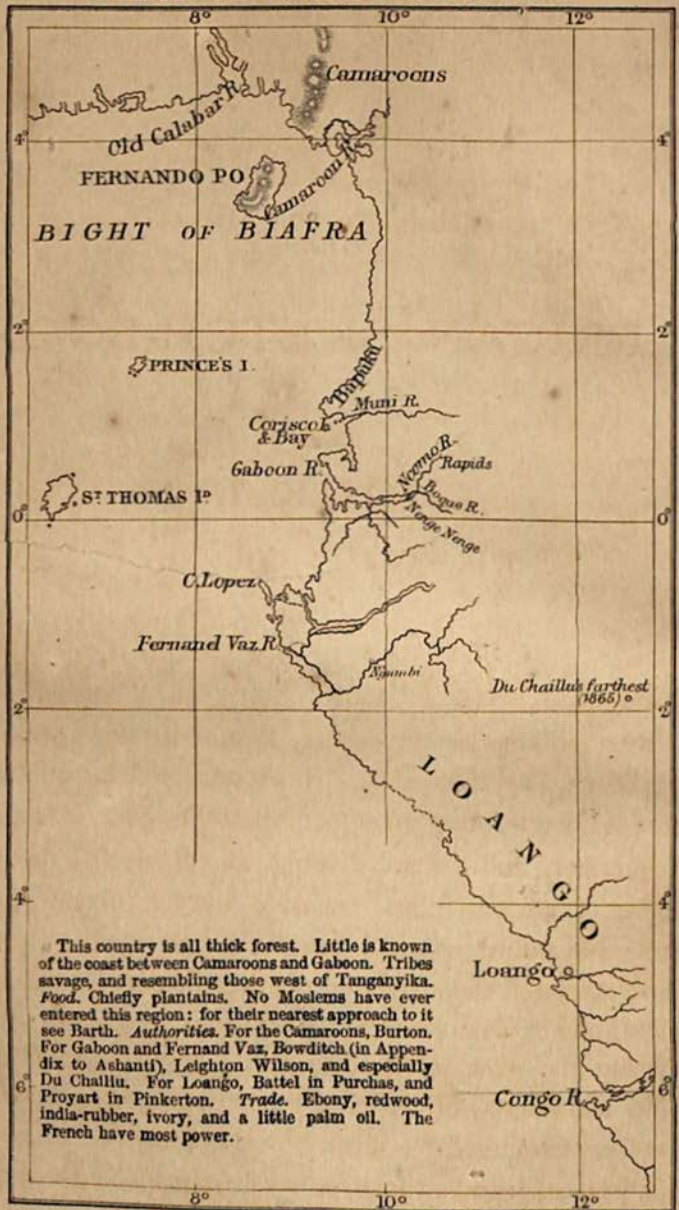
THE GORILLA COUNTRY.


8°
10°
12°
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2°
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Camaroons
Old Calabar R.
FERNANDO PO
Camaroon R.
BIGHT OF BIAFRA
PRINCE'S I.
Danger
Muni R.
Corisco & Bay
Gaboon R.
Ngonna R.
Rapids
Rogue R.
Nenge Nenge
S.t THOMAS I.e
C. Lopez
Fernand Vaz R.
Nkumbi
Du Chaillu farthest (1865)
LOANGO
Loango
Congo R.
This country is all thick forest. Little is known of the coast between Camaroons and Gaboon. Tribes savage, and resembling those west of Tanganyika. Food. Chiefly plantains. No Moslems have ever entered this region: for their nearest approach to it see Barth. Authorities. For the Camaroons, Burton. For Gaboon and Fernand Vaz, Bowditch (in Appendix to Ashanti), Leighton Wilson, and especially Du Chaillu. For Loango, Battel in Purchas, and Proyart in Pinkerton. Trade. Ebony, redwood, india-rubber, ivory, and a little palm oil. The French have most power.
0 20 40 60 80 100 English Miles
Stanford's Geog.l Estab.t 6 & 7 Charing Cross

London; Smith, Elder & C.o

THE

AFRICAN SKETCH-BOOK.

BOOK I.

THE GORILLA COUNTRY.

A CARTHAGINIAN LOG-BOOK

I WAS staying at a country-house in the autumn of 1861. The harvest had been gathered in, and the stubbles were being ploughed, yet the heat was that of summer, and we were lying at full length in the shade of ancient elms. Above us the black rooks flapped and fluttered, and painted leaves floated downwards through the air. Faintly the distant church-bell tolled, and the servants, starched and bedizened, were crossing the park in the direction of the sound. Then came the decree of Fate. My young host proposed that we should drive over to —— Farm, and see a friend of his who had just returned from his first voyage

as surgeon on board a mail steamer to the West coast of Africa. I said 'Yes,' and my future was decided.

The doctor received us in his shirt-sleeves, coast-fashion. Tea and toast, home-baked bread and home-brewed beer, yellow butter and rich milk, jars of tobacco and churchwarden pipes, all the luxuries of rural life, were placed upon the table, and as soon as we were settled down for the evening, *Africa* was introduced. The doctor's descriptions were picturesque, and as he discoursed on the wonders of a country which resembles no other in the world, a sudden fancy came into my head, and I declared I would go to Africa myself. He said that it was just the place for a literary man, and that I should be able to write a capital book when I came back—if I ever did. Next we discussed as to which region of the coast should be honoured with my investigations, and possibly with my remains.

Just at that time a controversy was raging in the 'Athenæum' respecting M. Du Chaillu's book; and it had become painfully apparent that nobody in London knew anything about the matter. The truth could be only ascertained by a trip to *Gorilla-land itself*, and so I determined to begin my African rambles with a critical journey on Du Chaillu's route, and an examination of his native companions and guides. My destination was, therefore, the GABOON—a West African river near the Equator, belonging to the French. The African mail steamers did not go farther than Fernando Po, but thence to Gaboon a passage could always

be procured in some trading vessel, or a French ma[illegible] of-war.

I left Liverpool with the December mail, which touched at all the British settlements along the coast—Gambia, Sierra Leone, Cape Coast Castle, Accra, and Lagos; also at certain rivers still belonging to the natives—Benin, Bonny, the Calabars, and Camaroons, where the traders dwell on shipboard, and pay customs to the kings as in the olden time.

The Settlements were originally fortified factories, half-castle, half-shop, constructed by the Royal African Company for the protection of their servants and the warehousing of their slaves. When the Company was dissolved these forts became the property of Government, and were garrisoned by black regiments imported from the West Indies by rotation. The commandant was governor, chief justice, and commander-in-chief; he made treaties with the neighbouring Powers, adjudicated between the negroes and the traders, and sometimes conquering a turbulent chief, put a slice of coast into the Downing Street larder, unnoticed by the nation. As the settlements expanded, civilians were appointed—governors, judges, collectors of customs, and colonial surgeons; gaols, post offices, bonding warehouses, and other public buildings were erected; the factories increased in number, the church and mission-house appeared. A few years ago the Governor of Sierra Leone was made the Governor-in-Chief, and the other

vernors ceased to be styled 'Your Excellency,' and ere named Administrators.

The trade of West Africa is important and rapidly increasing; in 1862 steamers ran to the coast once a month; they now run once a week, and yet their saloons are often half-filled with cotton bales, and their decks choked up with barrels of palm oil.

The first part of our voyage was delightful: we rose in the early morn and watched the outline of the coast; we sat beneath the awning and imbibed refrigerating drinks; the ice had not all melted, the South Downs and Dorkings had not all been eaten; our appetites were unimpaired. We breakfasted at eight, lunched at twelve, and dined at four; these repasts being served on dishes and plates adorned with a beautiful design—a negress offering fruit to an angel, and underneath the words *Spero meliora*. The angel represented the African Steam Ship Company, the motto a humane wish for larger profits.

There was a missionary on board who had been ordained by colonial hook or crook, and whose sweet simplicity endeared him to us all. Among other things he anxiously enquired of the captain whether the anchor went to the bottom, and then wished to know how it was kept there: was it tied with a piece of string?

With such a companion we could not fail of entertainment; and twice a week or so we touched at a settlement and were able to go on shore. No hotels were

to be found, but all houses were open on the arriv[illegible] of the steamer, and all of them resembled taverns.

But when we had passed Lagos, we only lay off the mouths of rivers, and took in palm oil. Never shall I be able to forget those latter days on board the steamer. Unhappily the memory is in some mysterious manner connected with the sense of smell, and so whenever I pass a dead cat or a foul drain I think of S. S. 'Armenian.'

At last we arrived at Fernando Po, which is not a river, as some authors have supposed, but an island, and the only settlement the Spaniards possess in Western Africa. It has been chosen, like Cayenne, on account of its salubrity, for the reception of political offenders, who are imprisoned in the harbour on board a man-of-war.

This method of confinement in a hot climate seems to be severe, but it is only fair to state that it is seldom protracted for any length of time. The prisoners, as a rule, are soon released, and when the happy day arrives nothing can equal the attention and politeness which they then receive. The drum beats to quarters, military music plays, a priest recites prayers on their behalf, and they are lowered over the side in a long narrow box which the carpenter has been ordered to make expressly for their accommodation. In other words, it is Death, and Death alone, that sets them free.

Who that possesses an imagination and a heart can look without a shudder on that Ship of Woe? Men

of intellect and birth are there, guilty perhaps of an indiscretion and no more, torn away from their loved ones and their fatherland. Never more will they behold the orange orchards of their childhood, or the balconies sacred to music and to love. On pallets they lie in their wooden cells, and hear the washing of the waters against their prison walls, and gaze through the port-holes on a mass of lifeless green, and so drift down the sad stream of existence and over the rough bar into the boundless sea.

That dark green mass filling up the prisoners' range of view so that only when the ship rolls can they see a strip of blue sky above and a strip of blue sea beneath, is the Peak of Fernando Po, a pyramid of granite, 10,000 feet above the level of the ocean, and clothed to its summit with gigantic trees. On the mainland opposite, twenty miles across, is the Peak of Camaroons. These two mighty columns form *The Gate of the Equator*, a portico worthy of the new heavens and the new earth beyond the Line.

When I arrived at Fernando Po, Captain Burton, its consul, was climbing the Camaroons, which is the loftiest mountain in West Africa, being higher than the Peak of Teneriffe. It is a volcano, and has been lately in eruption; but Burton found it quietly smoking, its head powdered with snow.[1] By some it is supposed to have been the Burning Mountain which Hanno, the Captain Cook of Carthage, mentions in his Log—a document

[1] See Burton's 'Abbeokuta and the Camaroons.'

of great antiquity and value, the sole relic of those archives which the Romans when they took the city presented to their allies the Berber chiefs.

But not in the latter days of Carthage was that Periplus indited, not in the days of her weakness and her shame. When Rome was merely a Latin town, Carthage was a great commercial city, the metropolis of the West. Her temples were adorned with Greek statues, trophies of the Sicilian wars; her nobles kept their elephant studs, and were waited on by slaves in herds; her streets were lined with workshops of weavers preparing the celebrated purple cloth; asses and mules laden with the timber of the Atlas drew up before the glowing glass-houses in which were manufactured the blue bugles and the speckled beads. Merchants of all nations met in her Exchange; ships from all countries lay at anchor in her port. She levied soldiers wherever she had enemies or friends; she forced or bribed all people to serve beneath her flag. In the great market-square might be seen Greek mercenaries dressed in bronze, Spaniards in white tunics, edged with purple, and wearing the short broad-pointed swords afterwards adopted by the Romans; blue-eyed, red-haired Gauls naked to the waist, and armed with cutlasses of soft iron which had to be straightened after every blow; the slingers of Majorca and Minorca, and the Berber horsemen galloping to and fro upon their barbs without saddle or bridle, mantles of bearskin floating from their shoulders, long spears in their hands, and

shields of elephant-hide strapped to their left arms. The war-galleys of Carthage destroyed the Etruscan rovers, drove back the Greek ships into Eastern waters, protected the colonies and merchant-marine. Her vessels traded to the ice-creeks of the Baltic, and obtained from Alexandria the riches of the East. Elba fed Carthage with iron, Spain supplied her with silver ; Malta was her cotton plantation, Sicily her olive orchard. The lands around the city were covered with vineyards and meadows and fields of waving corn. Agriculture was studied as a science, but Carthage was a gigantic city, her population overflowed, and a system of Government emigration was organised in consequence. Thousands of the humbler classes were sent out west along the coast and down south into the interior, where they founded cities and intermarried with the Berbers, who were white people like themselves and possibly of a kindred, that is to say of a Shemitic race. Emigrants were also sent away by sea, and Hanno, it seems, had charge of such an expedition. He commanded sixty vessels of fifty oars each, containing altogether thirty thousand souls; and his orders were to establish colonies along the Morocco coast beyond the straits.

This coast is fertile and watered by rivers as low down as the latitude of the Canary Isles. But there the Sahara begins, dividing Barbary from Guinea ; and there Hanno, having landed in various places the emigrants entrusted to his care, altered the character of his expedition, and commenced that grand exploring

voyage which has immortalised his name. He struck boldly to the south; on his left a waste of sand without water, without life; on his right a sea of darkness which at that time was supposed to have no end. But on went the Carthaginian explorers, and at length saw trees in the distance as if standing in the water; they passed the Senegal river, which divides the brown men of the Desert from the black men of the Soudan; and heard the night music of the natives, and saw the hill-fires burning down the withered grass; they passed the Cape Verde with its two round hills which resemble a woman's bosom, and which sailors call 'The Paps;' and the prairie land of Senegambia, and the mountains of Sierra Leone, and the forest-covered shores of the Grain Coast and the Gold Coast, and the muddy marsh through which by many mouths the Niger flows forth, polluting the sea and poisoning the air. They came to the Camaroons by night: its flaming head seemed to touch the stars, and they called it the Chariot of the Gods. Passing onwards still, they discovered an island in a lagoon, and encountered some hairy men and women, who defended themselves with stones. Three of the females were killed, and their skins suspended in a temple at Carthage as an offering or trophy. These creatures the interpreters called *Gorillas* (Γορίλλας). When the great ape of the Gaboon was discovered and described by Savage and Wyman, they sought for a name, and this one was suggested by the Periplus of Hanno. Thus it has come to pass that cabmen and

costermongers employ in their familiar discourse a word which was uttered in the streets of Carthage.

It is more than two thousand years since that voyage was accomplished, and Western Africa remains unchanged. Here and there, indeed, a few forts and factories have been erected. Manchester cottons are worn by the natives instead of the bark or palm-fibre country cloth; muskets are used instead of spear and bow; crockery-ware sometimes instead of gourds. But the people in their manners and customs are the same; and often as I have travelled in the dry season along the sea-coast in my canoe I have heard their flutes and tusk-trumpets and drums, I have seen their bush-fires on the hills, exactly as Hanno describes them in his Log.

But where is the Great City that sent forth that expedition? Where are its castles, its temples, and its palaces resplendent with the wealth of the West and of the East—with the tin of Cornwall, the amber of the Baltic, the ostrich-plumes of the Sahara, the gold dust of Soudan, the tapestry of Babylon, the calicoes of Coromandel, the fine muslins of Bengal? Alas! Carthage is no more. Even her ruins are denied to us: she has no remains. She was utterly destroyed, and nothing was left of her. She was cruelly and traitorously murdered, then her body was burnt, and her ashes scattered to the winds.

THE COAST

CAPTAIN BURTON'S house being open to all comers, I was there received, and found a library, into which I immediately plunged. Its rich and varied contents sufficed to prove that the Consul of Fernando Po was no ordinary man; for in Africa books are a faithful index to their owner's mind. They are brought out not as furniture but as friends, and are selected not for that beauty which is only calf-skin deep, but for those inner qualities which improve upon acquaintance. Whatever good looks they may have soon disappear in this climate. Their covers fall off and their pages turn yellow; they are cracked and shrivelled by the Harmattan or desert-wind, mildewed by the moisture of the rains, inhabited by cockroaches, and devoured by white ants. It is even said that they become depositories of disease, infecting the reader, as he turns their pages, like the poisoned manuscript of the Arabian Nights. Open a book which has been for some time shelved in the tropics, and there rises from it a peculiar musty smell. This, says a theorist, is caused by invisible fungous spores or vegetable germs, and these it is which produce the fever of the swamps. In the same way it is dangerous to lie in unaired sheets, to enter a room

which has long been darkened and disused, or to turn up the virgin soil; such being the very dens of death where the Malaria like a wild beast sleeps throughout the day. But when the night descends, and the bright sun has disappeared, it rises from its secret places, and steals along the river shore, and floats on the land-breeze to the vessels that are lying in the roads, and winds its way up the mountain, and creeps into the town and through the windows that are open to many a swinging hammock, to many a bedside. Sleep, sweet sleep, in England the restorer, is in Africa a peril and a snare.

This fungous theory has not been well received; the causes of malaria are as yet undiscovered, but its effects are sufficiently well known to those who have lived upon the coast. At Fernando Po I experienced my first attack of fever, and many a time I have since been 'down.' Having always taken notes, and sometimes experimentalised upon myself, I may be considered an authority upon this subject, which has a special interest for certain people in Great Britain. Those who may intend exchanging into a black regiment, to the grief and horror of their tailors—those who are applying for a civil appointment on the coast—those who have the opportunity of obtaining a three years' clerkship in the palm-oil, ivory, or gold-dust line of business, and are requested to give an early reply—must be desirous to hear something reliable and precise about the climate, and such information will

also be acceptable to the families of persons residing in West Africa, to their heirs-at-law, creditors, and friends, and to all money-lenders, insurance societies, and other benevolent corporations for the relief of suffering humanity. A few remarks on miasma will also be read by the general public with a kind of ghastly delight, as I infer from the frequency with which I have been asked, 'Did you often have the fever? Do you ever get it now? Is the Coast really so bad as people say?'

To this last question I unhesitatingly reply, 'It is.' There are many districts in tropical and semi-tropical countries which are as unhealthy as any part of Western Africa. But the Coast is distinguished by being uniformly bad. From the Senegal River to Little Fish Bay, from the Desert of the Moors to the Desert of the Hottentots, from latitude 15° N. to latitude 15° S. —a sinuous coast-line of several thousand miles—there is not a single cubic inch of air which is not in the night-time impregnated with malaria. No European resident escapes the fever, and even natives suffer from it, though in a less degree.

Next to sea-sickness fever is perhaps the most facetious of diseases; it always comes on like a practical joke. A. B. on a certain evening is in unusually high spirits; his imagination is active, he feels inclined to exercise his brain, and begins to write a long letter home, saying, among other things, that he has not had the fever yet, and does not think he will. But somehow

he finds it difficult to settle down to his task for any length of time. Conversation is more to his humour: he becomes excited in the course of it, drinks a little, goes to bed, sleeps with difficulty, has a series of dreams, and awakes feeling anything but well. He does not eat much breakfast, but thoroughly enjoys his cup of tea. At twelve o'clock he is seated with his friends in the piazza, suffering like themselves from the intense heat. Presently he puts on his coat, he gives a shudder, he becomes pale, his features shrink, his hair bristles up, his nails turn blue. He is taken off to bed, blankets are piled upon him, hot-water bottles are applied to his feet, warm drinks are poured down his throat, but the bed shakes with his shiverings, and his teeth chatter so loudly that they can be heard across the room; he is transported to the arctic regions. Suddenly he is whisked back to Africa, and then from Africa into the hottest room of the hottest Turkish bath that ever was invented. The cold stage is over, and the hot stage has begun. Putting your hand on his forehead is like putting it on a stove. Often delirium intervenes. There is always an agonising thirst, which should be freely indulged with fresh lemonade, or with cold water, if nothing else is to be had.

Then comes the grateful stage of resolution. The pores at length open, and shed an abundant and refreshing rain on the surface of the skin. The paroxysm is over, and the patient feels himself weak, but otherwise as well as before. Let us suppose that he does

not *cut* the fever, as it is called. The next day passes; the feebleness about the knee-joints is departing; he believes that he has nothing more to fear. On the day after that he is again in the piazza; it is again the sultry hour of noon; he is again imbibing his favourite beverage and smoking his cigar; and again comes that mysterious shudder; again he is alternately iced and roasted like the souls in Dante's 'Inferno;' and so on indefinitely: unless the usual medicine be administered—viz. Peruvian bark in the compact form of sulphate of quinine.

The African fever is exaggerated ague, and is chiefly dangerous from repetition. It gradually weakens and depraves the system, preparing the way for other diseases, and sometimes creating complaints of its own. No precautions can save the resident from fever, but a well-regulated life can certainly diminish the frequency and virulence of the attacks. The mid-day sun and the night air should be avoided, the clothing should be warm, and the diet generous; for an empty stomach is an open sepulchre, and the policy of total abstinence is doubtful. Many awful cases of teetotallers prematurely carried off are cited on the Coast. On the other hand, temperance is essential to health; whatever in England would produce a morning headache, or a state of nervous debility and languor, will in Africa be attended with very serious results. Occupation is the best preventive. I have remarked that the busiest men are those who suffer least; but no one, I repeat,

entirely escapes, and no one enjoys in Africa that elasticity and buoyancy of body which is felt at home. Women almost invariably lose their beauty; children almost invariably lose their lives.

I do not think I should ever advise a friend to accept an appointment, commercial or official, in West Africa. The days of mercantile adventuring are past; fortunes may be quickly lost upon the Coast, but they cannot be quickly won; the trade is regular, competition is severe, and profits are small. In Africa, as elsewhere, a young man must patiently work for several years before he can hope to gain an independence. As for the officials, their salaries may be nominally large, but so are their expenses. There is very little money to be saved, and promotion beyond a certain point is not to be easily obtained. If a man can bear the climate and the Liberated Africans, the Colonial Office appreciates those rare and rhinoceros-like qualities too well to transfer them to another sphere.

But though West Africa has few rewards for the trader and official, it is for an explorer the land of lands. In no part of the world are so many new things to be found. There are regions of the Coast where, on the beach itself, the traveller is surrounded by awe-struck natives, who have never seen a white man before. Even in those places which have been frequented by Europeans for the last four hundred years, little is really known of the people that inhabit them.

The surface features of African life have often been described, and vary little from the Niger to the Nile; but in the ideas and feelings of the negroes a new world of thought remains to be discovered. It is my purpose in this work not only to relate the wanderings of my younger years, and the explorations of a later time, but also to expound the continent of Africa: to show in what way it is connected with the history of the world, to chronicle the achievements of which it has been the theatre, and to paint the inner life of its people, among whom I so long resided, not as a foreigner but as one of themselves.

And now let us pass through those gigantic portals towering on either side like pyramids of green marble —the Peak of Fernando Po and the Peak of Camaroons. Let us enter the region of the Line, the borderland of the hemispheres, where the broad and bulging earth whirls round more swiftly than at home—where the stars of both skies are visible, and the hours are equally divided into day and night—and the zodiacal light tapers upwards to the zenith—and the winds blow faintly—and the forests of the Gorilla Country look across the ocean to the forests of Brazil.

THE FOREST

I MADE the acquaintance of a trader from Gaboon, who was returning to that river, and who gave me a passage in his vessel. We sailed along the shores of equatorial Africa, a gloomy region of forest-covered hills, and after a fortnight's voyage reached our destination. Most of the African rivers have difficult and savage bars: they foam at the mouth, as if they were dragons guarding the golden fruit of an enchanted land; but the Gaboon is an exception to the rule: it is a broad, calm expanse of water, with sluggish current and strong salt-tides, resembling an arm of the sea. It is an excellent harbour, for which reason it is used as a coaling station by the French. We saw their white buildings on the left as we entered the river, but sailed on to *Glass*, the English settlement, which is a little higher up, and consists of several factories lining the water-side, a brown cluster of native huts, and the frame-houses of the American mission perched on the rising ground behind the town.

The country people, who are called Mpongwe, soon swarmed round us in canoes. Native traders came on board, asked the news, and cast gluttonous eyes upon myself, hoping that I was somebody out of whom some-

thing could be made. They wore European clothes of the kind usually denominated 'slops,' but their feet were bare. Next came off the factory boat, manned by negroes of quite a different type from the slim, graceful, almost feminine Mpongwe, being strong, stalwart men, with muscles like those of the Farnese Hercules. These were the Krumen, a laborious race who inhabit the wilder parts of the Liberian coast, and hire themselves out to Europeans for a three years' spell, their employers engaging to return them to their own country when they have done their time. They also serve as sailors on board English men-of-war. On my way down the Coast I had engaged half a dozen of these people, who, bending over the vessel's side, conversed eagerly with their compatriots, chiefly in ejaculations, till we stepped into the boat and were rowed ashore.

I was now in the Gorilla Country, as soon became apparent, for a skin of that ape was hanging out to dry on the factory palings, and a *young* one was kennelled in the yard. It was quite tame, but died shortly afterwards, sincerely lamented by its owner, who, could he have carried it to England alive, would have realised a fortune. The gorilla is not so common as the chimpanzee, and does not seem to bear captivity so well. However, there is little doubt that some day or other this renowned ape will make its appearance at the Zoological Gardens, to brighten the holiday of the artisan and to alleviate the Sabbath of the fashionable world.

Dinner was served in the factory piazza or verandah, the candles being screened by large glass barrels open at the top. We were joined by moths and other winged members of the insect world, including fireflies, which were lighted under their tails and vented flame in rhythmical puffs. Behind each chair stood a footman arrayed in the black livery of Nature. The banquet was therefore animated and picturesque. The soup was followed by excellent river fish, and these were succeeded by fowls and goat—sheep being scarce in the Gaboon, and bullocks entirely unknown, though on most other parts of the Coast they are plentiful enough.[1] The vegetables were plantains, a kind of banana, which, eaten in its unripe state, yields a mealy food, the staff of life for the Mpongwe; yams, or bread-roots, as the Germans call them; batatas, or sweet potato; and cassada, or manioc, from which the tapioca of commerce is prepared. These indigenous products are by no means pleasant to the palate of the newly-arrived European, and I was not sorry that tinned peas and French beans were also placed upon the board.

I shall now attempt to convey some idea of trading-life in the Gaboon. My friend's factory is a house all ground-floor, built of a kind of palm vulgarly called bamboo. Behind the verandah is the parlour, and beyond that again the store, which is deliciously cool and dark, and fragrant with native spices, placed therein

[1] The tsetse exists in certain regions of Western Africa. Horses and bullocks cannot live where this insect is found.

to keep away the moth. In this deep cave-like recess may dimly be descried strings of beads hanging down from the rafters in festoons, huge piles of cotton cloth, chiefly romals and satin-stripe, crates of earthenware, bundles of American tobacco in the leaf as smokers bought it in the Elizabethan age, boxes of pipes, casks of Coast o' Guinea rum, barrels of coarse powder, bags of flints, and Birmingham trade guns, long as the ancient matchlocks, with shining barrels, and stocks painted a bright red. At six o'clock the store-keeper opens the wide-folding doors, and the natives throng in to make small purchases, and imbibe their morning dram. The clerk sits down to his accounts. The factor examines his books, or writes letters to his employers, or bargains with the native traders, or superintends the sturdy Krumen as they row to and fro from the ship to the shore. Canoes come sailing down the river with the land-breeze of the early morn, bringing their petty cargoes of produce from the bush, while others are being filled with European goods ready to start for the interior. Commerce here is carried on by means of middle-men. The Europeans purchase, the bush-tribes produce, and the Mpongwe, or coast-people, monopolise the trade between the two. If the natives of the interior come down to the sea-side they are not allowed to go on board ship, to visit the factory, or in any way to traffic directly with the white man. As a rule they remain quietly at home, and are visited by some Mpongwe trader, who, having obtained goods on credit

from a factory, sails up the river to a bush-village, where he is boarded and lodged at the public expense. He shows the villagers his goods: not till they have seen them will they begin to work. They then go into the forest; they cut ebony and camwood into billets; they pluck the golden nuts of the palm tree, boil them, crush them, and squeeze out the oil; they collect bees-wax; they bleed a creeping plant, the creamy sap of which dries into cakes of an inferior india-rubber or caout-chouc; the inhabitants of other villages are sometimes allowed to bring their contributions; while elephants' tusks, which descend from the interior, bought and re-bought from tribe to tribe, at length arrive into the hands of the Mpongwe. As soon as his goods are bartered away, he fills up his canoes, sails back to the factory, and receives a large commission in cloth, rum, and tobacco—the money of the Gaboon. Followed by slaves carrying his barrels and his bales, he returns to his own house, and is at once surrounded by relatives and hostile friends. He is treated to his face as if he were a rich man suddenly become defunct. Women dance in his honour, and sing verses complimentary as epitaphs; a council of the next of kin is held for the division of his goods, over which they quarrel bitterly, and full display is made of those emotions which with us are felt, but concealed, at the reading of a will. Yet such is the character of the negro that he would rather give up all that he has earned than run the risk of being called 'a stingy fellow.' That epithet amongst a people such

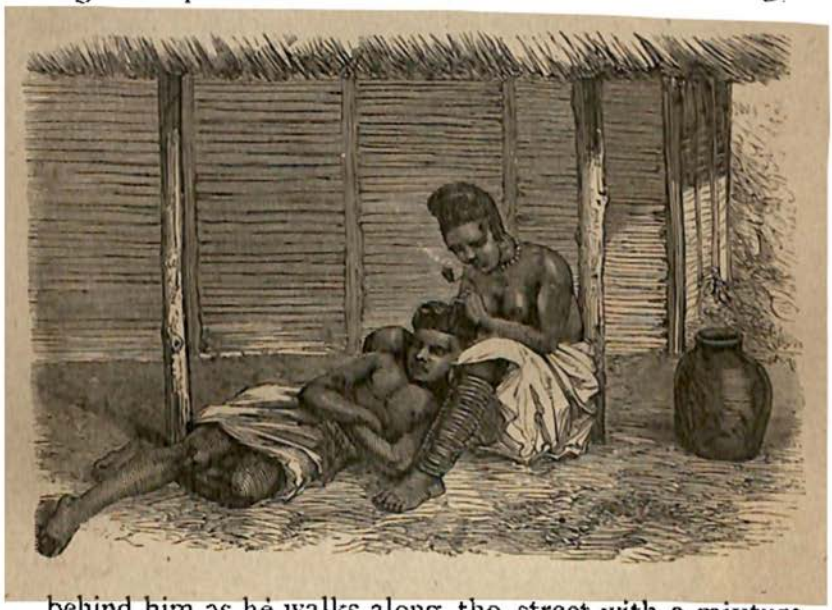
as the Mpongwe is the most opprobrious of all; coward, liar, and thief being comparatively terms of endearment and esteem. However, the unfortunate rich man is allowed to keep something for himself, that he may be encouraged to go and trade again: this money he expends on wives and slaves, builds a house with a 'deck,' or planked floor, in imitation of the factories; makes a collection of crockeryware, as we do of old china, and occasionally gives a champagne breakfast to the traders.

There are many people in England who suppose that 'the treacherous natives' are always in a state of latent hostility, regarding white men as intruders, and yearning to shake off the foreign yoke. It would, however, be just as reasonable to imagine a conspiracy of landlords to drive away the English from Paris and the Rhine. Whether we are beloved on either continent is doubtful, but in each our presence is ardently desired. The negroes are dependent upon us for the clothes which they wear, the rum which they drink, the tobacco which they smoke, the weapons and powder which they use in war, hunting, and festivities: our beads are their jewellery; we import iron for their spearheads; even the idols which they worship are often manufactured at Birmingham. In out-of-the-way parts, where trade is intermittent and uncertain, the natives have recourse to the Black Art to draw vessels to their river, and sometimes human sacrifices are made upon the bar that the ship may pass over it in safety. When this has been accomplished, the whole town breaks out into dance

and song. 'Now,' they cry, 'we shall have beads! Now we shall have tobacco! Now we shall have rum!'

The old voyagers speak of the Mpongwe as a rude and savage people, but several generations of intercourse with Europeans have rendered them refined in their appearance, courteous and persuasive in their manners. Even their language has been changed; it is soft and melodious, differing much from the harsh guttural dialects of the bush-people, who are nevertheless their kinsmen. The Mpongwe have slaves to do the wood-cutting and garden-work, which kind of labour among the poorer tribes devolves upon the squaws. Hence the coast ladies are genteel, and can give due attention to the business of the toilette. They paint their cheeks (and sometimes their chins) with rouge extracted from the root of the camwood tree, and chalk their necks in patterns, so that a little way off they appear to be dressed in lace. They part their hair down the middle, and ridge it over frizzettes of cloth to make it appear abundant, and form it into fantastic shapes. They place little rosettes of artificial hair above their ears, and insert a hair-pin of ebony or ivory delicately carved, and use for perfume the scrapings of a fragrant bark. Round their necks are strings of variously coloured beads, while their legs are clothed in enormous rings manufactured by themselves from staircase rods, and of such a weight that some of the women can scarcely walk, and if they fall into the water (as sometimes happens) these victims of fashion sink to rise no more.

The native gentleman is not less dandified; he may be seen lying for hours with his head in his wife's lap, being *coiffé* by her experienced hands; he ties a string round his upper arm to make it full and round; he delights to put on much cloth, and to hear it trailing



behind him as he walks along the street with a mixture of the lounge and swagger not unfamiliar to London eyes; above all, he rejoices in an old umbrella stick, which gives forth a jingling sound sweet to his ears, as the tinkling of spurs to 'gents' who never ride.

My host kindly invited me to remain altogether at his factory, but wishing to live as much as possible among the natives I determined to rent a house and make it my head-quarters as long as I remained in the Gaboon. A tenement was shown me, situated by the

river-side, and built on wooden piles, a consideration of some importance where the soil exhales disease. It consisted of three rooms, throughout which a sofa, a chest of drawers, and four chairs were tastefully distributed. In the smallest room I found the proprietor suffering from fever and surrounded by his wives. After a little conversation I broached the subject of my visit, for which he seemed to be prepared. Having expatiated at some length on the size of the mansion, its commodious position, the elegance of its furniture, and his own reluctance to leave it—especially when he was so ill and required all the comforts of a home—he asked me a rent which would have been exorbitant for a set of chambers in the Albany. I went off without vouchsafing a reply, and in my innocence supposed the affair was at an end. But a day or so afterwards he called upon me at the factory, and apologised for having asked so much. He had fever at the time and had wandered in his speech. I was a great white man: he was only a poor negro. I wanted his house; that was sufficient: I must have it—at twelve dollars the month.

To this I agreed, and afterwards ascertained it was not more than double what I ought to have paid. I moved in at once with my articles of outfit, which the Krumen scattered at random throughout the apartments. Surrounded by bullock-trunks, saddles, tents, gun-cases, cooking utensils, tool-chests, and the fragments of a cast-iron stove, I felt very much as if I had been shipwrecked. The young men of the village came in

playing on musical instruments and uttering the salutation. Many of them had beautiful forms, and their faces were often gentle and benignant; yet I could not but remark that the features of each seemed to be fashioned in the likeness of some animal—a monkey, a fox, a sheep, a deer, or a bird. At this moment the fever of Fernando Po returned: I became giddy and confused; I could not control my words; and all the faces around me grew more and more animal in their appearance, till at last the scene resembled that which Landseer has portrayed in his picture 'The Defeat of Comus.'

The head wife of my landlord arrived, and, perceiving that I was ill, sent away my visitors, brought a cup of tea, and, sitting down by the sofa, chatted to me in the kindest manner. She was what they call on the Coast *a frock lady*—had been educated by the missionaries and wore an English cotton dress.

At length came the night. My portable bed, with a rug and the sofa pillow, were laid upon the floor; a lantern and a cup of water by my side. The fever-paroxysm was past; my head Kruman wished me good-night and went away, and I was dropping off to sleep, when I heard a low sighing sound, which gradually swelled into a roar, mingled with the shouts of the villagers as they scampered to their huts. It was a tornado. The salt river waves beat furiously against the rocks beneath my windows. Feeling rain upon my face, I looked upwards and saw the naked air; part of

the grass-thatch had been blown away. I tucked up my bed under my arm and hunted with the lantern for a dry plank, which I finally discovered in the outer room.

The next morning I received a visit from one of the American missionaries, who invited me to lodge at his house, observing, with a twinkle in his eye, that I was not very comfortable where I was, and that I need not rough it before I went into the bush. I confessed that I had come to a similar conclusion, but feared that I should put him to some inconvenience. 'On the contrary,' said he. 'As you have never been in a hot country before, you will be sure to have a bad fever, and it will be more convenient for me to nurse you in my own house than to come all the way down here.'

So my dwelling was degraded to a lumber-room, and I was domiciled in a delicious little chamber, from which I could see twenty miles of blue river and trees shadowy in the distance.

These New England Presbyterians are earnest, frugal, pious men, living without pleasure and almost without hope—at least as regards this side of the grave—speaking the native dialects with admirable fluency and precision, and labouring patiently on a stubborn soil. They do good in a variety of ways, not only to the natives, but also to their white parishioners; and many an Englishman has had reason to bless the mission house at Baraka.

It was now time for me to think of a trip into the Bush, and first I had to engage a dragoman or 'steward.'

One day I was accosted by a very plain negro, who told me that his name was Mongilomba. He had been in the service of M. du Chaillu, or Mr. Paulo, as he called him, could clean guns, skin birds, read and write, and possessed several other valuable accomplishments. A short conversation proved him to be intelligent, and I accordingly engaged him. In the afternoon he came, and said his brother wished me to write out an agreement. I did so. The next morning he brought it back to me, and said his brother wished me to insert the date.

Mongilomba was fat and youthful. His skin was bronze colour, pleasantly mottled with black spots, for the pigment is sometimes laid on by Nature with eccentricity. Like many men of genius he was indolent, but an excellent storyteller (in both senses of the word), an ornithologist, and a rhetorician. It was said of Pericles that even when thrown in the wrestling-place at the gymnasium he would argue so skilfully as to persuade his opponent that he (Pericles) had been victorious; so when Mongilomba lost (or, more probably, stole) my best scalpel he proved to me that it had glided from his hand in such a stealthy and unexpected manner that no one in his place could possibly have intercepted its escape. Again, when I directed him to dry my Shetland stockings, and he brought them back to me in ashes, he explained that the Fire had done it, and that mortals were unable to control the fury of the elements. When enraged by some negligence of this Ethiopian philosopher, I assaulted him with words, he remained

imperturbable, and gave me those soft answers which do not turn away wrath. But if he saw that I was not quite sure of my ground he would deliver majestic soliloquies in Mpongwe, looking at me sternly from head to foot. For that matter he was always rather haughty, and only shook hands with me in the morning when he awoke in a good humour.

The villages of the bush-people are situated on the banks of the river, its tributaries, and its creeks, these being the roads of the natives, and canoes their carriages and carts. Mongilomba arranged that I should visit a certain village of the Shekani tribe, and hired a canoe with paddles, rudder, mast, and matting sail; also a guide to show us the way among the streets of water, which are as numerous and labyrinthine as those of a great town. More than once in these African deltas I have taken the wrong turning and spent the night out of doors.

We started with the tide and sea-breeze, keeping well out in the middle of the stream. Flocks of snow-white birds gleamed upon the surface of the water, which was ruffled here and there by shoals of fish. We could also see canoes in the distance, looking intensely black, and resembling buoys: they were motionless and apparently unoccupied; but when we came close we found in each of them a negro lying at full length, with a foot dangling over each gunwale, and a fishing-line tied to each great toe. Towards the afternoon the wind changed and the tide turned, and then other canoes came drifting

downwards with the ebb, their owners also being fast asleep. In one of these a bush was stuck in the prow, and acted as a mast and sail—no doubt the earliest contrivance of its kind.

We now diverged from the main road into a narrow creek, lined with mangrove bushes, beneath the tangled arcades of which was a floor of black mud, inhabited by crabs with brightly painted claws, and burrowing like rabbits; also by curious creatures, half newt, half fish, which skipped along with a duck-and-drake motion curious to behold. More curious still were the oysters growing on trees; for the outside mangroves stood in the water up to their waists, and their lower parts were encrusted with these molluscs, which the ebb exposed to view, and which thus led an amphibious existence, half in the water and half in the air.

Behind the mangroves rose a high green wall of

forest trees, with open sunlit spaces like windows, here and there. Monkeys chirped from their hiding-places in the leaves, or jumped with a crash from tree to tree. Parrots, with their red tails flaming in the sun, flew high above us, uttering the whistle so familiar to our ears. As the trees shut out the wind, the mast was taken down, and the Krumen, seating themselves on the gunwale, seized their paddles, and burst, according to their custom, into song. The water was so smooth that the spray-drops from the paddles danced along the surface like globules of quicksilver; a sweet-voiced bird warbled from the mangroves; and a kingfisher flew before us as if to show the way.

Presently we heard a banging of pistols, and a large canoe came in sight. Within it was a native gentleman very drunk, who saluted us with the cry, 'My brother dead! Have some rum!' He treated us all round out of a small calabash, informing us every time he filled it of his relative's decease, and always in the same joyous tone. Funerals are festive in Africa, partly out of compliment to the deceased and to propitiate his ghost; partly, perhaps, to drive away the gloomy feelings which are naturally felt on such occasions, and to drown sorrow in the (vegetable) bowl.

It was after six o'clock, and, therefore, dark, when we arrived at the landing-place of the Shekani village, and we had some difficulty in making the natives appear. War is chronic in these regions, and night attacks are often made under semblance of a friendly visit. How-

ever, the repeated cries of the guide, 'We bring white man!' or in other words, 'We bring money!' had the desired effect. We were at first reconnoitred, and a voice spoke to us from the darkness. Being satisfied with the reply, it gave a shout, which was faintly echoed from the village in the distance: lights flashed among the trees, and presently two young women stood beside the landing-place, holding torches of gum wrapped in plantain leaves, spluttering sparks into the air and diffusing a pleasant fragrance around. These damsels lighted me along a rough footpath to the village, where I was greeted by the chief. He at once led me to his hut, which I entered on all fours, the door being only three feet high.

I was now in the hearth and home of savage life. Nets, spears, bows and quivers were hanging from wooden pegs upon the walls. In one corner of the room was a large earthen jar filled with water, and a calabash or gourd floating on its surface; in another was a pile of billets, the house-wife's pride; and in another were three clay pots and a sitting hen. In the centre was the fire, which is the candle of the Africans, and warms their unclothed bodies and purifies the miasmatic air. There being no windows or chimney, the smoke had lined the inside of the roof with soot, but otherwise the hut was scrupulously clean. It contained an inner apartment with a bamboo couch, on which my bed (made of india rubber and filled with cork) was rolled out, with an air pillow of gutta percha, and a woollen

rug, of imitation tiger skin, much admired by the natives, who supposed it to be real.

I ordered two eggs for my dinner: they were taken, as I afterwards discovered, from under the sitting hen, and put in a clay pot on the fire. A discussion now arose between Mongilomba and the chief, the former asserting that I would not eat the eggs because they were hard-set. he argued *a posteriori*, having seen other white men reject them for that reason. The chief argued *a priori* that, as white men ate eggs (which the natives seldom do), and also ate fowls, it was only rational to infer that they would eat them in the intermediate condition. Meanwhile the dinner was served, and just as the chief had brought his argument to a triumphant close, one of the eggs whizzed past his ear like a bullet and broke against the wall. However, my wrath was pacified with an apology, on which light meal I retired to my couch. The joy created by my arrival, and the cloth and tobacco which would thence result, began to be displayed in the usual way; but with the self-confidence of youth I at once constituted myself chief of the village, and bawled out to them 'to stop that cursed drum;' whereupon, with much humility, they did so, and went to bed. But when all else was silent, what strange sounds proceeded from the forest!—hootings, howlings, and plaintive cries, with all kinds of insect noises, metallic in their character, and resembling machinery. Such a whirring and clicking and clinking I had never heard before; and one little creature that

was actually in the hut seemed to wind itself up and run down like an alarum, every five minutes. It is said [1] that of all live things in the tropics frogs produce the most curious vocal effects; and outside my door was a colony which cawed like rooks. In addition to these various sounds, I heard to my horror a thin shrill hum, which announced the presence of mosquitoes. I had no net, they, therefore, dealt with me at their pleasure, singing and drinking all the night. After a time it seemed to me that their humming became incoherent, and at last, to my diseased fancy, it began to resemble, 'We won't go home till morning;' and they did not.

As soon as I saw the first grey gleams of dawn through the chinks and cracks of the wall, I passed into the public room, and stepping over the black bodies which lay spoke-wise round the fire, with their feet towards it, I removed the hurdle which was placed before the 'hut-mouth,' and stepped out into the open air. I found that the village consisted of a single street, with a gutter at the side to carry off the rain. The huts were built of wattle-and-dab (hurdle-work covered with clay), and were roofed with a heavy grass thatch. Broad-leaved plantains encompassed the village, and behind them towered up some huge forest trees, on which parrots and pigeons were still at roost. The foliage was drenched with dew, and the atmosphere was cold and dank: all now was silent, for the Night had died and the Day was not yet fully born.

[1] Hooker's 'Himalayan Journals.'

But as soon as the first rays of sunshine appeared, the parrots whistled, the pigeons cooed, the leaves turned towards the light, the dew-drops pattered down in a shower on the ground, the flowers opened their beautiful eyes and received the morning calls of butterflies and bees. The forest began to buzz and hum like a great factory awaking to its work.

The villagers now arose, rolled up the mats on which they had slept, placed aside the round logs which had served them as pillows, replenished the fire, and liberated the fowls from the inverted baskets under which they were confined.

The women shouldered their hoes and strode off to the plantation, which was situated at some little distance from the village, or went with their black clay pots to the public brook, where they took a sociable bath, conversing loudly on their domestic cares. The men went away to the forest with their flint-and-steel guns, the locks of which were covered with guards of monkey-skin to keep the priming dry. The old men and boys, having nothing else to do, inspected my proceedings. They saw me boil some water in my camp-kettle, throw in a handful of withered leaves, pour out in an enamelled iron cup a brownish liquid like the stagnant water of the swamps, and finally flavour it, as they supposed, with lumps of salt. Next uncasing my double-barrelled rifle, I fired off a couple of caps, at which everybody laughed, as if I had said something facetious. I then marched into the bush, attended by Mongilomba and

a native hunter. Passing through that peculiar shrubby vegetation which always springs up on ground that has been cleared, we crossed a mangrove swamp and entered the primeval forest.

I then experienced an impression similar to that which I have felt on passing from the garish modern streets of some Italian town into a vast cathedral, with avenues of dusky pillars, and lamps faintly glimmering through the dark and perfumed air. For now I no longer saw the bright and brazen sun: strange odours stole upon me: a profound silence weighed upon my ears; and before me glided, with a noiseless step, the naked figure of my savage guide.

We walked in a road which elephants had made, and sometimes the hunter turned round, and, taking me by the hand, led me on one side; then showed me a huge log suspended point downwards in the air, and connected with a creeper which was trailed across the track: when the elephant, passing by, tripped over this creeper, the log of wood fell upon his neck and killed him on the spot.

The bottom of the forest was open, with only a brake of bushes here and there, and was floored with leaves and dry wood, slowly decaying into vegetable mould. Creeping plants like cordage united the trees together, and sometimes a withered trunk was suspended in its fall, as a mast when cut away is sometimes entangled in the rigging. So mighty were some of these primeval trees that a bird on the *lowest* bough was out of shot. Often

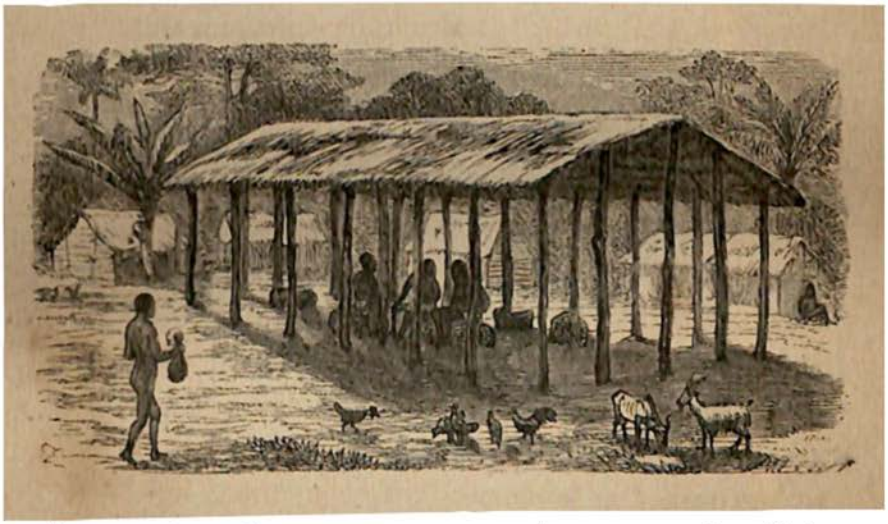
we came to brooks flowing in the channel of natural ravines, bridged over simply by a tree cut down. I had then to take off my boots, and walk over as best I could, holding the gun like a balancing pole in my hands.

Now and then we came to small prairies or meadows, like bright green lakes amid the forest; in these buffaloes and antelopes feed at morn and eve.

When the sun was high we sat down by the side of a brook and ate some roasted plantains. The hunter, seeing that I wished to drink, brought me water in a folded leaf. Then we rested for awhile, and I fell into a reverie.

I used when I was a boy to look forward to bedtime, for as soon as the light was put out and my eyes were closed, the scenes of which I had read would appear like pictures to my mind. And now here I was, in the great wild forest of my waking dreams; and here was the hunter with his bow and arrow, and here was the vast footprint of the elephant, impressed in the red clay, by the margin of the stream: it all seemed familiar to me, rather as a memory than something new. And at first the forest had for me a wondrous charm, but I soon began to weary of it: nothing is more depressing than to pass many days in these gloomy halls of verdure, with walls and ceilings of a sombre green, with never an horizon, and but seldom a glimpse of the blue sky; without sound or motion, save the rustling of a squirrel or a lizard, the chirp of a monkey, or the grating voice of the cicada. My hopes of sport were quickly dis-

sipated, for in the recesses of the virgin forest, as in the dark depths of the ocean, animal life is rare. Water is plentiful, fruits abound, yet all is silent and deserted. There are few flocks or herds; antelopes and buffaloes are usually found singly or in pairs; the elephants go in twos and threes. The grazing animals being few in number, beasts of prey are also scarce. There are no lions; the leopard is the monarch of the forest, and is said to sleep in a hollow tree through the season of the



heavy rains. It appears strange that game should be found in such enormous quantities on the withered plains of Southern Africa, and yet be so scanty in a land where vegetable life is luxuriant and never fails. But in the forest there is little pasture, and perhaps the moist, miasmatic, dimly-lighted air is injurious to quadrupeds as well as men. But whatever the cause

may be, the fact is universal, and has been observed, not only in Equatorial Africa, but also in Brazil.[1]

When I returned to the village at eleven o'clock, the old men were seated on logs, smooth and glassy from use, in a large open shed—a roof supported on poles—in the centre of the village. Public buildings in savage Africa are always thus constructed, for the sake of light and air, and from these bare poles the column is descended. The Palaver-House serves as the village club, where ladies are not permitted to intrude; it is also employed on great occasions as the hall of justice, and chamber for the council of the elders. The questions discussed at these meetings are not always of a trivial kind; for though this village only contained thirty or forty souls, it was nevertheless an independent State, with a territory of its own, making laws, contracting alliances, and waging foreign wars.

I sat down among these venerable senators and conversed with them viâ Mongilomba. Presently boys came in from the bush, carrying vegetable bottles frothing over with palm-wine, which is the sap of a tree, tapped in the evening and running all night into a bottle suspended under the incision. In the early morn it is simply a luscious syrup, but when left awhile in the sun, it ferments into an intoxicating liquor, which drinks like gingerbeer, and afterwards affects the brain like military port.

This beverage preceded the siesta. It was now the

[1] Darwin's 'Naturalist's Voyage.'

Noon, the period of silence and tranquillity, the hour which the Portuguese call *The Calm*. The sun sat enthroned on the summit of the sky and poured its white rays upon the earth ; the street and the house-roofs shone under the light, as if they were covered with snow. The old men retired, the children were called in by their mothers, and the huts were closed. Even the fowls and the twittering birds took refuge in the shade.

The hunters returned in the afternoon, and the others ran to meet them, and welcomed them as if they had been gone for years, murmuring to them in a baby language, calling them by their names of love, patting their breasts, and laying arm upon arm, shaking their right hands, caressing their faces, and embracing them in every possible way, except with the lips ; for these poor benighted creatures have never discovered our civilised method of endearment.

An interesting memoir might be composed on 'The Geographical Distribution of Kisses.' The New Zealanders, Tahitians, Papuans, Australians, and Esquimaux are unacquainted with the practice,[1] but it is Africa which possesses the sad distinction of being the largest non-kissing area in the world. Whether this fact is due to the African women having black lips (sometimes, though rarely, the under lip is red) is an interesting speculation. The *origin of kissing* may, perhaps, occupy, as it deserves, the attention of some future

[1] Tylor's 'Researches into the Early History of Mankind,' 2nd edit. 1870, p. 51, quoted in Darwin's 'Expression of the Emotions,' p. 216.

Darwin. Was it discovered by a man or a woman? Is the table-land of the Oxus and Jaxartes, or that of the Tigris and Euphrates, the cradle of the custom? For my part I am inclined to believe that the first kiss proceeded not from a lover's, but a mother's lips: In the backwoods of Liberia I saw a woman nursing her baby, and placing her mouth against the child's—it was not quite a kiss, but it was very nearly one; and is it not natural to suppose that our tenderest embrace has sprung with our tenderest feelings, from the deep pure sources of maternal love?

The original organ of kissing was probably the nose, for in the South Seas they rub noses together as a mark of affection; and though the Africans cannot do this because their noses are so flat, an analogous custom prevails in Senegambia: when a Mandingo wishes to announce his passion, he takes the hand of his sweetheart and sniffs it ardently three times.

But let not my lady reader despise the poor untutored African, or judge him too severely on account of an ignorance for which he is not to blame. He is ever willing to adopt the customs of a higher race. A converted negro in the Gaboon assured me with honest pride that, though the heathen did not know how to kiss, the Christians were proficient in the art; and once in a village on the Grain Coast, a young Kruman, sitting with his wife, called out to me, 'Lookee, massa, I sabby kiss!' and forthwith suited the action to the word, while the lady seemed to be much amused, and

not altogether displeased with this novel application of the lips.

The kiss has been a powerful agent in the annals of the human race. There have been kisses, like those of Antony and Cleopatra, of Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn, which have shaken an empire or destroyed a religion. If we knew the secret history of Courts, we should probably learn that nations have been created or erased by the magic touches of a woman's lips. A great problem, therefore, rises before us: 'Has this discovery proved an affliction or a blessing to mankind? Probably the latter; for it has certainly increased the influence of women, and the influence of women is employed more for good than for ill. Beloved, tender hearted women, companions and consolers of our life! With a kiss you welcome the infant to the world; with a kiss you bestow on soft-cheeked youths the raptures of first love; with a kiss you alleviate the agony of death. And what, alas! are the kisses which men too often give you in return? Judas-kisses, treacherous and fatal, which poison innocent hearts, and turn to curses on painted and despairing lips. Happy are those who can remember without remorse the kisses of their youth!

THE WITCH

I SPENT a week at this village, rambling in the forest throughout the day, at night listening to the conversation of the natives, and taking down their legends, fables, and songs. I especially studied their religious rites, which made Mongilomba shake his head and say, 'Ah, Mr. Reade, you fond of fetish too much!' evidently suspecting me of a secret inclination towards paganism. However, he assisted me in my researches, and informed me that a celebrated fetishman lived in a neighbouring village. I sent him a message, and he came the next day, attended by half a dozen of his disciples. He was a tall man, dressed in white, with a girdle of leopard's skin, from which hung an iron bell of the same shape and size as our sheep-bells. He was covered with horns and shells, and many other kinds of amulets, which dangled about him as he walked. He had two white marks over his eyes, and various cabalistic dabs of paint on his arms and breast. I told him that I was a great fetishman in my country, took some of my own hair, frizzled it with a burning glass, and gave it him. He popped it with alacrity into his little grass bag, for white man's hair is fetish of the first order. Then I poured some raspberry vinegar into a glass, and offered it to

him, saying that it was blood from the brains of great doctors. Upon this he received it with much reverence, and dipping his fingers into it, as if it were snapdragon, sprinkled with it his forehead, both feet between his first toes, and the ground behind his back. I then requested to see some of *his* fetish, but he demanded such an exorbitant sum for the trouble of trying to take me in, and asked me so often to give him my burning glass, that I was glad to pay him his fee and send him away; after which I was solemnly warned by the natives against the cunning and avarice of fetishmen.

These spiritual pastors are neither beloved nor esteemed by their flocks, but contrive to shear them closely all the same. The Africans may hate the fetishmen, but never doubt their supernatural authority and power. They are general practitioners in prayer and physic, deliver oracles, heal diseases, predict the future, detect thieves, exorcise the possessed, and superintend all rites, sacrifices, and ceremonies of religion. In their mysteries they employ a wooden whistle, its orifice covered with a bat's wing, which gives forth sounds not unlike those produced by comb and brown paper, and firmly believed by the people to be 'voices from the spirit world.' The looking-glass serves them as a magic mirror, in which they exhibit the images of the absent and the dead. But their chief office is that of Witchfinder and Administrator of Ordeals, and then the farce of superstition becomes a tragedy, as will presently be seen.

On my return to Baraka I met another member of the mission, Mr. Mackey, who lived at Corisco, a little sea-island near the mouth of the Gaboon. He suggested that I should pay him a visit, and make trips to the neighbouring mainland. I gladly accepted his proposal, remaining only at Gaboon a few days to write up my diary and memoranda. But before I went away I had what is called a *Palaver* with my Krumen. The vagabond life of the traveller was by no means to their taste; they preferred—and nobody can blame them—their regular daily work, with food in measured quantities at stated hours, and in the evening the company of their countrymen, with the dance and music of their native land. So now, hearing that I was about to leave the comparatively civilised Gaboon, they marched up to the house in single file, Smoke-Jack, as head man, leading the way, Bottle o' Beer, Straw Hat, Dry Toast, Corkscrew, &c., bringing up the rear. Such humorous appellations are bestowed upon Krumen by the captains and agents who engage them, native names being difficult to remember and pronounce.

'What is the matter now?' said I.

Smoke-Jack picked up a piece of wood with his toes, took it in his hand, looked at it with a perplexed air, and flung it away. I repeated the question. Then he came out all in a burst:—

'Mass'r! We go bush with you. Paddle plenty. Mosquito bite we too much. We no catch good chop (get good living) there. S'pose Kruman no chop fine, he no fit work fine—for true.'

'Well?'

Smoke-Jack (gathering courage).—'Now you want catch Corisco! (With scorn) Corisco no place at all! No factory lib there. No Kru-boy lib there. Only bush-nigger lib, no more. Gaboon, he fine place. I like sit down here long time—for true. But Corisco no place at all.'

As I liked my Krumen and did not wish to part with them, and did not understand why they should object to a place because it was not a commercial emporium, I at first declined to consider their objections, telling them gently but firmly to mind their own business, to go to . . . with various other expressions of the same nature. Upon which, strange to say, they became exceedingly impertinent; insinuated that I had no more worldly goods than a mere missionary-man, and in fact openly rebelled. For the Gaboon they had been engaged, and in the Gaboon they would remain. Accordingly I paid them off, obtained them another master, and saw them a few days afterwards with red bargee caps on their heads, and new cloths round their loins, rolling casks in the midday sunshine, glistening with perspiration, and as merry as grigs; though what a grig may be I have not yet been able to ascertain, and probably never shall.

Mongilomba hired for me a stout canoe with Mpongwe paddlers, and we sailed to Corisco, which, even in this luxuriant land, is distinguished for its beauty. It is a little world in miniature, with its miniature forests, miniature prairies,

miniature mountains, miniature rivers, miniature lakes, and miniature cliffs on the sea-shore. The natives are called Bengas, and are closely allied to the Mpongwe. Missionaries are the only white men on the island, and congratulate themselves upon the fact; for their precepts are not counteracted by the example of the traders, and the Church is not overshadowed by the Factory, as always happens when they both stand side by side. Wealth is a virtue in savage life: 'good' and 'rich' are synonyms. Not only are rich men courted and flattered, they are really esteemed. The natives do not *respect* a poor man whatever his private character may be, and in such settlements as Gaboon the missionaries are poor in comparison with the traders. But in Corisco they appear to be rich, and they are, in a certain sense, the lords and masters of the island. The influence thus obtained is employed, it is needless to say, for the advantage of the natives themselves, and it is only to be regretted that the missionaries have not more. While I was at Corisco an incident occurred which showed how powerless are verbal arguments to extirpate old customs, or, in other words, to change the constitution of the native mind.

One evening as we sat in the parlour of the mission-house with the window open, we heard a wild and piteous cry arising from a village near at hand. My friends immediately became grave and silent, and two girls in the school-room adjoining burst forth into clamorous lamentations. They were called in and told they might

go home, for they belonged to the village from which the cry had come. This, I was informed, was the death-wail, and would be the knell of more lives than one. A chieftain had been lying for some time in a hopeless state; a woman had been found guilty of bewitching him; and her son, who was seven years old, had been included in the verdict, lest he should become the Avenger of Blood when he grew up to be a man.

Although the Africans understand that death can never be escaped, as is shown by their song—

> Rich man and poor fellow, all men must die:
> Bodies are shadows; why should I be sad?

—yet they do not seem to regard it altogether as a natural event, and when a person of importance dies, the fetish-man is summoned to make a post-mortem examination, and to declare the cause of the death. He mutters incantations, casts down knotted cords, and looks intently in his glass. Sometimes he says a Spirit killed the man for having neglected to make him presents (through the fetishman) and to consult Him on his affairs. Sometimes he says the death came from a witch. Then the village drum is beaten, that the people who are in the plantations may hear it and return. For the drum has its language. With short lively sounds it summons to the dance; it thunders forth the alarm of fire or war, loudly and quickly, with no intervals between the beats; it rattles for the marriage; it tolls for the death; and now it says in deep and muttering sounds: *Come to the ordeal! come to the ordeal! come! come! come!*

The people assemble and stand round in a ring. The fetishman begins to sing, and then he walks about with a tiger-cat skin in his hand. He lays the skin at the feet of the witch, singing all the while. When the song is done the people seize the witch (I use this word in a general sense), and then the ordeal is administered. The accused is usually a slave of no value, or some one against whom the fetishman has a grudge, or some one whom the people have already suspected, and are ready to condemn.

The ordeal is administered in all cases of suspected crime, and the method varies in different regions of the Coast. In some parts the accused plunges his hand into a scalding mixture. In Bonny he is made to swim across the creek, in which, every day, the sacred sharks are fed. In another kind of ordeal (which I have witnessed myself) something is put into the prisoner's eye to dim his sight; several grains of Malaquetta pepper are cast upon the ground before him, and he must pick them all up without missing one. In the Delta of the Niger the Calabar bean is given. But the commonest kind of ordeal is the Draught, which is usually prepared from the bark of some poisonous tree. The accused drinks, and then, turning towards the four quarters of the heavens, calls upon the demons to attest his innocence. He is ordered to walk backwards and forwards, and to step over branches that are laid upon the ground. If the poison acts as an emetic, he preserves his senses, and is acquitted, but if the draught is retained it speedily

affects the head; the prisoner becomes drunk; the branches rise up before him like the great trunks of trees; he lifts his legs high as if to straddle over them, and at last falls down. He is usually killed upon the spot. But the Corisco woman, who was found guilty in this manner, was remanded, her victim being still alive. Had he recovered she would not have been punished, for the Africans do not consider sorcery in itself a crime—in fact, all white men are supposed to be magicians—but punish a person for killing by means of sorcery, just as they would punish any other kind of murder.

The woman in question had confessed her guilt, and as she had been flogged for some hours beforehand, there was nothing mysterious in the avowal. But witches do frequently accuse themselves when not compelled, and will even enter into minute details—such as directing the people to look in some particular place where they will find the witch-power, which is usually a buried spider or a bundle of dried plants. These self-accusations were common enough in the middle ages, as everybody knows, and have usually been attributed to hallucination. But the fact is that such people were actually witches — by intent. Wherever sorcery is a general belief some people will practise it, as they suppose. They cannot indeed have interviews with Satan, or ride through the air on broom-sticks, except in their dreams. But they can do certain things which they believe will cause sickness, calamity, and death to those

against whom they are directed. They can mix hell-broths, and mutter imprecations, and make little waxen images of their intended victims, whose lives will waste away as their images waste away when buried in the ground. Such arts as these are perhaps practised in England by 'white witches' at the present day: they are certainly rife in Africa and other savage lands.

The next morning I went up with Mr. Mackey to the village. The man was still alive; he had become suddenly speechless in the night, which had made them suppose that he was dead. We found him lying in a state of stupor on the bamboo couch. The hut was completely filled with women, who had taken off their gay clothing and shaved their heads, in token of grief. Sometimes one of them would sit down by the sick man, throw her arms round him, and implore him not to die; while others, believing that the soul had actually left the body, but was still hovering round it and might be persuaded to return, called to it by his name, and eagerly beckoned with their hands, and cried in earnest accents, 'Come back, Adonga: come back into your body. O do not abandon us; do not go away!'

In grave contrast to their shrill sorrow sat the men, also naked, in the chief house of the town, silent and fasting. On the ground in their midst crouched the child, his wrists tied together, and the marks of a severe wound visible upon his arm. The woman was not there; she had been scourged in such a manner that she was not fit to be seen.

Mr. Mackey said that he had come to speak to Okota, the nearest of kin. Okota issued from the crowd, and, seating himself at Mr. Mackey's feet, listened to him with an attentive and respectful air.

'Death,' said the missionary, 'must come to all. It is foolish to think that if a man dies he has been bewitched.'

'Death must come to all,' replied Okota, 'but not always from God. Sometimes it comes from the hand of men.'

'But how do you know that this comes from the hand of men?'

'The woman was given *quai* (the ordeal drink), and *quai* says that she has done it.'

'But *quai* can sometimes be wrong. When Isambo went to the Muni he was lost a long time. All people thought that he was dead. One man, you said, was the witch; that man you gave *quai*, and *quai* said he had killed Isambo. But Isambo came back after all, and *quai* was wrong.'

At this there was a roar of laughter.

'It is not only *quai*,' said Okota. 'The woman confesses she has done this thing. What man comes to you and says, *I have stolen your fowl*, if he has not stolen it? That woman is killing my brother, and when he is dead I will kill her.'

It was the first time, so Mr. Mackey informed me, that he had received such a candid answer from the natives. They usually pretended to be convinced by

his arguments, promised to liberate the witch, and afterwards killed her as secretly as they could; but never had that excellent man (whose earthly labours are now at an end) been able to save a single life.

The woman was taken out to sea and drowned: the boy was burnt alive. Bags of powder were tied to his legs, and, as an eye-witness described it, made him 'jump like a dog.' When I asked why the boy had been put to death in a more cruel manner than the woman, my informant seemed to be astonished, and replied that burning and drowning were all the same. From this one might infer that the barbarity of the negro is mere ignorance and thoughtlessness, like that of the schoolboy spinning a cockchafer; which, by the way, I have seen a full-grown negro do with a certain kind of beetle, and watching the operation with ludicrous delight as if it were a toy. But negro barbarity is not ignorance alone. It cannot be denied that the Africans are connoisseurs in cruelty, that murder is one of their fine arts, that executions with them are entertainments, which they vary with a view to artistic effect. The scenes which take place when they kill their criminals or prisoners of war, and in which women and children take an active part, are too horrible to be described. And yet these same people are timid and gentle in their ordinary moments; they seldom ill-use their wives, their children, or their slaves; they are frightened by the severity which prevails on board a man-of-war; and I have seen them start with horror at our pictures of battle-fields covered with the wounded

and the dead, and cry, *O white man, too cruel, too cruel!* Such are the anomalies of human nature. The gay, light-hearted Parisians, the mild, peace-loving negroes, are transformed to monsters when their evil passions are aroused.

TURTLE

CORISCO BAY abounds with grey mullet and green turtle. The former are taken in casting-nets, made of the pine-apple fibre, which is soft and glossy as the finest silk. When the mullet are seen splashing in the shallows the fisherman steps through the water as silently as he can, lifting his feet high, and with a dexterous movement of the wrist throws the net so that it spreads out in the air as it descends. It is drawn in full of shiny, dancing bodies, which are dried in the sun, and when they are 'ripe,' or, in other words, putrid, are used as a sauce piquante for plantains and cassada.

The turtle are speared by moonlight, and as I wished to see something of the sport Mr. Mackey introduced me to a skilful turtler named Abauhi, who told me it was now full-moon, and so, if it did not rain, I could accompany him that very night. At sunset I watched the dark mountains on the Main across the bay. Not a cloud appeared above them. At eight o'clock I went to Abauhi's hut; he said that when the moon rose above the plantains we could go.

It was one of those nights in which, say the natives, it is impossible to catch fish because the sky has too

many eyes. When the moon had risen above the green-leaved trees Abauhi, came forth, carrying a couple of long spears, and followed by two men with paddles in their hands. He led the way down to the beach, and pushed a small canoe into the water. He then asked me if I could swim, as canoes were often upset in the turtle-spearing business. I was obliged to reply that I could not. He seemed surprised at my venturing at all on the water in such a case, and advised me to go home again. Finding that I was not inclined to do this, he placed me in the bottom of the canoe, holding the sides with my hands, and told me not to stir after we had once started.

His injunction was quite unnecessary, for, as we wobbled along in this tiniest of vessels, it seemed to me that only a succession of miracles kept it from capsizing. But after a little while I saw and admired how cleverly these men preserved its equilibrium with delicate touches of the paddle and inclinations of their bodies.

Now Abauhi stood up in the prow, with a foot on each gunwale, and the moon shone on his swelling arms as he threw himself into vigorous and graceful attitudes. We came to the lonely side of the island, where no lights glimmered on the shore, and no voices or music could be heard. Softly we glided through the shallow waters outside the dark shadows of the rocks and trees. The sweet and balmy air breathed lightly on our cheeks; the night-earth uttered its mysterious sounds: hushed and

still lay the sea, and seemed to smile in the moonlight as it slept.

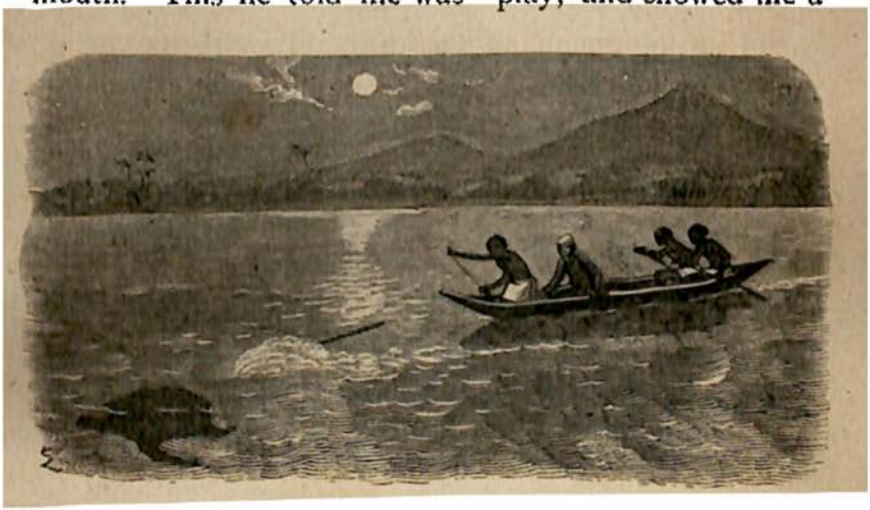
Two mortal hours, and nothing had been seen. Clouds encircled, and threatened to obscure the moon. My joints became horribly cramped; and when I looked at the dim water over which we passed, I could not believe that it was possible to see a turtle where I could see only the reflections of the stars.

But the two men continued to paddle without saying a word. Abauhi remained as attentive as ever, his eyes lowered and his spear upraised.

Suddenly the spear was hurled into the water. The men gave a yell. Something large and black leapt through the air, and fell into the sea with a prodigious splash. Abauhi snatched up a spare paddle, and the canoe seemed to fly. In front could be seen a cloud of white foam skimming along the surface of the sea. This I supposed to be the turtle itself; it was, however, the staff of the spear: the turtle was in the water underneath. The iron spear-head, which is small, with an almost imperceptible barb, is tied by a string to the staff or butt. When the spear is thrown, and the turtle is struck, the spear-head remains in the flesh, and the staff, separated from it but retained by the string, floats on the surface of the water, prevents the turtle from diving beyond the length of the string, and marks its course.

As soon as he had caught the staff, which, drawn by the turtle, was hissing along the surface of the sea, Abauhi drew the creature towards the canoe, playing

it like a salmon. He then gave it the second spear: again it sprang from the sea, looking black against the moon; and we had another burst, but this time much shorter than the last. The turtle was now 'distressed,' and with a *yo hee yo!* (borrowed from English merchant sailors) was hauled into the canoe, when Abauhi welcomed it by patting its head, and spitting down its mouth. This he told me was 'play,' and showed me a



scar on his arm which a turtle had inflicted in sportive retribution.

We hunted an hour longer without a find, and then returned to Corisco. The turtle lying in the bottom of the canoe uttered the most extraordinary sounds, all of which caricatured humanity. Sometimes it was a harsh, dry, consumptive cough; sometimes the hawking sound emitted by Yankees previous to expectoration; sometimes a deep-drawn, gasping, eructative, apoplectic,

after-dinner sigh. I carefully noted down these vocal peculiarities, with the view of writing a memoir upon this interesting Batrachian ; and the next day, having caused the animal to be dissected, I made three scientific experiments, all of which were attended with complete success. The first resulted in an excellent soup ; the second in a dish of cutlets ; and the third in liver fried. Of these I ate in the evening to repletion, and dreamt that I was alderman soup in the infernal regions, being lapped up by plethoric green turtle in scarlet robes.

THE CREDITOR

SOME time after this event, as I was writing in my little chamber near the sea, I heard a peculiar song, which I at once recognised as that of Krumen, mingled with the sound of oars. I looked out of window, and saw a large boat coming towards the beach, with a white man seated in the stern. He was the carpenter of a vessel trading off the Bapuku River, at a little distance from Corisco, and had come over in the long boat to buy fowls and plantains. Here was an opportunity of passing over to the Main. I asked for a passage, and obtained it; put money in my purse, or, in other words, cloth and tobacco in my box, and engaged Abauhi, who could speak a little English, as assistant to Mongilomba.

We started the next day. The sea-breeze was due at noon, but on this occasion it was late, and we lay, as I have lain many a time in that terrible bay, a white-hot unclouded sun above, a calm implacable sea below. Sometimes the sea-breeze does not blow at all, so the Krumen were ordered to their oars, and languidly dipped them in the sullen deep. Others stood up, shading their eyes with their hands, and trying to detect the first ripple on the brink of the horizon. Presently one of them turned the wetted palm of his hand seawards.

Wind come! was the cry, and in a moment all faces brightened; the oars were shipped and the sail set. At first it flapped dubiously against the mast, but soon, coyly expanding, opened its white bosom to the breeze. The boat bowed gracefully up and down, and then began to 'speak,' as the sailors say: there came a pleasant sound from underneath the prow, and the bubbles floating past us showed that we were off. The Krumen sat down to plait grass hats and mend their shirts, which they held between their toes, while they worked away with perforated fish-bone for needle, and plaintain fibre for thread.

Butterflies were roaming about in the middle of the bay. Some of them passed overhead with a swift hawk-like flight, giving two or three strokes with their broad and powerful wings, and then skimming through the air. Others fluttered close to the surface of the sea, on which they perched, as if sipping the salt water. Their fragile bodies floating by showed that there was danger in the practice, and sometimes these shipwrecked creatures of the air took refuge on board the boat. One of them settled on the shoulder of a Corisco man, who shook it off (as a bad omen) in terrible dismay. I always took pleasure in watching these insects, for their ways are not as the ways of butterflies in England. They often collect in swarms and migrate, flying over the tops of the highest trees, and darkening the air.[1] In

[1] Compare Andersson's 'Lake Ngami,' p. 274. Lander's 'Niger Expedition,' vol. i. p. 62. Bates' 'Amazon,' ch. vi.

the dry season they resort to the brook side and perch on the mud, apparently to drink, incessantly opening and shutting their wings, as the Spanish ladies with their fans. And in the darkest, deepest regions of the forest, where no flowers are found, where no bird-songs are heard, where no sunbeam can ever penetrate, where perpetual twilight reigns, a beautiful blue butterfly may frequently be seen flashing through the dusky shades, and feasting on the corpses of vegetable life.

The breeze was continuous, but was not fresh enough for the long-boat, which had been built for heavy seas. We therefore sailed but slowly, and in the evening the wind left us, and the men took to the oars. At sunset no ship was visible, and the carpenter became alarmed. The bark, he told me, was lying close under the shore, in a small bay, so that the trees shut out the light. There was now no moon, and he feared that we should miss her. The second mate had passed her one black night a matter of five miles, and was never the same man a'terwards. Dead? Yes, *he* was dead, and most on 'em there as wasn't dead was dying.

The sun set red and angrily; the clouds began to rise overhead. The spring rains were now at their height, and fell mostly after dark. I was therefore disgusted, but not surprised, to see a flash of lightning just above the trees. The carpenter put on some old-fashioned oil-skins, I 'the pocket reversible coat, weighing twelve ounces'—waterproof no doubt in an English shower, but not suited to African rain, which went through it at once by sheer weight.

The rain thickened the air; no mast-head light had been hoisted; and, had it not been for the lightning, we should not have found the ship, especially as the carpenter was so afraid of passing her that at first he would not let us approach her at all.

But when a happy gleam showed us the naked masts in the distance, the Krumen gave a cry of delight, and pulled together with a will. Soon we glided under her dark side; the ladder fell clattering, and a lantern held by a sailor poured its yellow light upon us.

The master was lying on the after-lockers in his shirt and trousers: he welcomed me heartily, introduced me to the mate, and apologised for the absence of the mast-head light. Here I noticed that the carpenter and the mate glanced significantly at each other. A Malay steward, with a villanous expression of face, brought me some salt junk and ship's bread, and a bottle of beer; and, when my supper was finished, showed me to a bunk. The skipper came to see if I was comfortable, and told me in confidence that he was much troubled with the drunken habits of the mate. He hoped that I would stay on board, as my presence might be a check upon him; but I said that I intended to live on shore.

The next morning I examined the bark. She had been sent out to the Brass River—in the Delta of the Niger—but, not being able to fill with palm-oil, had taken to coasting for a cargo, and had come to these out-of-the-way parts to load with ivory and dye-woods. Goods had been given out on trust, but no produce had

been received; and so the vessel was high, and the hold was bare.* Day after day the creditor-ship lay there, mouldering in rusty chains, suffering the sickness of hope deferred; every day the captain went on shore to dun the village chief, and always with the same result.

The decks, fore and aft, were covered with awnings, from which were hung pumpkins, bunches of plantains, specimens of bladder-fish, and other curiosities. Cages ingeniously made of rope, or of old soap boxes with bars of hoop iron, were filled with grey parrots, which, screaming incessantly, reminded me of the Pantheon. Against the mainmast was nailed a small dove-cot, from which the pigeons made short and timorous flights. A tame rabbit was running about on the poop, licking the moist planks, and sometimes visiting the steward's pantry below in quest of more substantial food. And on the forecastle-head were four sickly wretches, the remnant of the crew: two of them were playing at chequers with pieces made out of a shark's back-bone; another was fondling a green monkey with a white spot on its nose; the last was sitting with his head in his yellow hand, and his eyes fixed on the sea, which afterwards became his grave. All the work of the ship was done by Krumen, as frequently happens on the Coast; and it is difficult to understand how the trade could ever have been carried on without them. It frequently happens that every white man on board a Coast o' Guinea ship is 'down,' and cases have occurred in which, there being no Krumen on board, all hands have died, and a vessel containing a

valuable cargo has remained upon the waters like a wreck or castaway.[1]

I took a hut on shore, and found myself among a wild and savage-looking, but not ungentle race. Their villages, like those of the ancient Germans, were composed of huts or clusters of huts, each belonging to a family, and each separated from the others. These families were united into a Commune, and presided over by a Patriarch, who had no regal power, being merely 'primus inter pares.' Each paterfamilias was a despot as regarded his own family; a republican as regarded the State or Commune. Houses, gardens, women, and children were recognised as private property, though not in so rigid a manner as with us; while the goods obtained from foreigners by trade or service, hire of canoes, house rent, &c., were divided equally amongst the Fathers.

Now, just at present the village was under a cloud. The Fathers were in debt to the ship, and did not mean to pay: first, because they saw that the vessel was a bird of passage; and secondly, because they were little accustomed to trade, and did not appreciate the marketable value of a good name and the policy of meeting their engagements. Under these circumstances they wanted the ship to go away, for savages resemble civilised people in not liking to be dunned. They refused to sell fowls and plantains to the captain, plead-

[1] 'The "Ann Grant" has been laden for some time, but cannot come down the river, all hands being dead.'—*Letters of a Lady from Sierra Leone.*

ing poverty as their excuse; nor was the statement entirely without foundation. These people grow only enough for their actual wants; if they sell food for beads and tobacco they have to go on short commons, and if they sell too much they have to starve. A Portuguese commandant on the Zambesi bought all the rice that was offered him for sale at harvest-time; but when 'the hungry season' came the natives were forced by famine to go and buy it back from him at double and treble the price which he had paid.[1]

The captain procured provisions from Corisco, and dunned the village every morning: he went up the river and dunned the villages along its banks; for there was not a hamlet in the neighbourhood which was not in his debt. At last he resorted to a plan which is common enough upon the Coast, especially in the Delta of the Niger. He arrested one of the villagers who had come on board, and put him into irons. This answers well in a Commune where all the citizens stand by one another. But the captain made a serious mistake; he continued to go on shore. One morning he met a debtor on the beach. 'Well,' said the captain, 'have you any wood for me?' 'Yes,' said the man, 'I have got ten pieces. Would you like to go and see them?' The captain thought he would like to go and see them. They let him look at the wood: two or three others sauntered up: a rope was thrown over him, and his hands tied behind him in a trice. However, at the intercession of

[1] Gamitto, 'O Muata Cazembe,' p. 67.

the village interpreter, a Corisco man, he was released, and Jack, his head Kruman, taken in exchange. 'Black man,' moralised Mongilomba, 'always listen to other man's palaver; if palaver be good, he take him; but white man have hot head, hot hand, hot tongue, and ear be cold.'

When afterwards I came out of my hut into the village, I *noticed how* polite everybody was. No one passed me without giving the salutation and shaking hands; and afterwards, when I wanted a canoe to take me off to the ship, they let me have one for nothing—the first and last incident of that kind which occurred to me in Africa. All this the kind-hearted people did to show that their quarrel was not with me. I went to the hut, and found Jack in durance vile. One foot was passed through a hole in a heavy log of wood—the native stocks. Now this contrivance was unknown in the Kru country, and therefore Jack felt aggrieved. In his country he would have been lodged on a kind of platform or loft, just under the roof, and over the fire; and for my part, having seen both methods, I should decidedly prefer the stocks. But there is a great deal in habit; and Jack considered himself an ill-used man. He did not complain of being imprisoned in another man's stead; that was 'all in the month,' as the sailors say: it was a ship palaver, and he belonged to the ship. But the Wood was a novelty he could not get over. 'I no sabee this thing,' said he; 'this no fashion in we country.'

The prisoners were soon exchanged, and the palaver 'set.' The captain, as may be supposed, was very bitter on the subject, and accused the natives of cowardice and treachery, forgetting that he had seized a man who came peaceably on board his vessel. It was fortunate for him that he had done no worse: the natives are timid, patient, and forbearing, and eager for the white man's trade; but the avenging of death is with them a sacred duty; the ghost of the murdered man would never cease to haunt them if they left it unperformed; his blood would cry to them from the ground.

A little to the south of Bapuku is the Muni river, and in front of its mouth some sandbanks, which are called the Alobi, or Mosquito Isles. Upon one of these islands a Captain Stewart built a factory, and traded with the people of the Main. He was a violent man, who never treated the natives well, and when he was drunk baited them with bull terriers. All this was borne without resistance, but not without resentment.

It happened that he had a debtor, who openly declared that Stewart should never get a billet of wood or a cake of rubber out of him. The man took care not to venture within his power; but Stewart arrested two of his relations, who were fishing out at sea, chained them hand and foot, and placed them on board one of his vessels, lading off Alobi. Somebody foolishly untied their hands, and they, being probably in fear of their lives, jumped overboard and tried to swim across to the Main. Both

were drowned, their bodies were washed up on the beach, and some marks were found upon them, which might have been caused by the rocks, but which resembled gun-shot wounds. In any case, Captain Stewart had indirectly caused their death.

That same day he was tried by a council of chiefs, in the presence of all the people. The cause was argued as fairly as if he had been arraigned before an English court of law. There were some who pleaded for him, attempting to prove that no wilful murder had been committed, and pointing out the risk they ran of losing altogether, by an act of violence, the white man's trade. But the two corpses lying in their midst, the death-wail of the women ringing in their ears, the bitter memories of past brutality, spoke with a voice too stern to be silenced by motives of prudence and calculation. The verdict was given; the sentence was passed; the execution was prepared.

The moody looks of the people, their whisperings, their grand council, and the consciousness of his own cruelty made Stewart feel he was in danger. Before he went to sleep he set a guard of Krumen at his door.

It was a large room with a glass window. In one corner was the bed: here Mrs. Stewart slept; he himself slept on a mat in the middle of the floor. A cotton wick, floating in a saucer of palm-oil, lighted the room sufficiently for that which was to follow.

Now imagine, in the dead of night, the long black canoes creeping slowly over from the Main, with soft

muffled touches of the paddle; the sound of footsteps stealthily approaching; a whispered threat, and the Krumen flying from their post; something dark behind the window, a blaze of fire, a crash of shivered glass, a loud report, the room filled with smoke, and a poor woman awaking to see the blood streaming from her husband's breast.

When she found that he was still alive she called the Krumen, and sent them over to Corisco for Mr. Mackey. The morning came; she was kneeling by Stewart, trying to staunch the wound, when the door was burst violently open, a band of naked men poured into the room, their foreheads blackened with the war-paint, and brandishing weapons in their hands. She flung herself upon the body of her husband; two powerful arms tore her from him, and held her, struggling, as she saw a gun muzzle placed to his breast. When the deed was done they went away without mutilating the corpse or insulting the widow. It was a judicial assassination. The English consul came over to the Muni, arrested two of the murderers (or rather executioners), and handed them over to the Spanish authorities at Fernando Po. They were acquitted, and with justice. If white men act like savages, let them be judged by savage laws.

THE TORNADO

I MADE a little trip into the Bapuku country, ascending the river thirty miles. It was a bright swift stream, with as many turnings as an English lane, so that we were always coming to a corner, and thus took many an aquatic bird or troop of monkeys by surprise. I sat in the bow with my double-barrelled smooth-bore in my hands, and blazed away, greatly delighting my canoe-men, to whom any kind of noise was music, and any kind of flesh was food.

Sometimes the sun was on the right hand, sometimes on the left, for the river, like a serpent, seemed to turn upon itself. The creeping plant from which india-rubber is obtained sometimes stretched from tree to tree across the water, its narrow stem being gashed and scarred. The river murmured pleasantly; little whirlpool dimples danced round and round upon its surface; snags stood up in the water and nodded to us as we passed: on these a kind of blue martin was usually perched. The villages were numerous along the banks, and before we saw the pale green plantains in which they were embosomed, we could always hear a shouting and screaming, as if a fight were going on, but it was only negro conversation. At last our progress was

completely stopped by an enormous tree which had fallen, as I supposed, by accident right across the river. But this had been done by the natives of the village just above, when the captain came up to dun them; it was their manner of 'sporting the oak.' However, as I was not a creditor, they showed me the way by land; and as soon as I was seen approaching, the king came to greet me apparelled in his regal robes—an old pea jacket and a pair of white duck trousers. He led me to his own hut, which contained a table and a chair, and ordered some plantains to be brought for my men. I had shot a monkey in the morning, and Mongilomba persuaded me to lay aside all prejudice and try it with odika. This odika is the fruit of a wild mango: the kernels of the stones are roasted like coffee, pounded, and poured into a mould of basket-work lined with plantain leaves. When cooked with meat it gives a rich gravy; a specimen may be seen in the South Kensington Museum.

The king offered to join our repast, and we dined in state. The table was covered with a scarlet cloth. Two wash-hand basins smoked upon the board; in one boiled plantains were served, in the other monkey and odika. There was a dingy salt-cellar, from which we helped ourselves to dingier salt. Mongilomba opened my chest, in which he kept his own clothes, and put on a clean shirt (publicly) with a dignity becoming the occasion. The dinner went off, or rather went down (and kept down) very well. The monkey was more

than a success. It seemed to me that all that there is most exquisite in the hen pheasant, the ortolan, the canvas-back duck were united in the little creature I was eating. When the meal was ended, and sweet digestion crept upon me, I sank into a voluptuous reverie, which gradually deepened into sleep. Then I had a gastronomic dream. The discovery of a new dish, says Brillat Savarin, does more for mankind than the discovery of a new star, and I began to regard myself as a benefactor of my species. I had not only discovered a new vegetable gravy, but also that monkey had a game flavour. I read *Jocko à l'odika* in all the cartes of the London restaurants; I saw myself invested with the freedom of the City by a grateful Corporation.

Awaking, I beheld a man who was eating voraciously. The stomach is a region of sympathy (Van Helmont). I watched him at first with good-natured appreciation; secondly, with curiosity; thirdly, with envious desire. What was he eating? A greyish coloured mess piled in a calabash. Into this he dipped his wooden spoon with movements so rapid that they would have excited my admiration had they not aroused my fear. In a few moments it would all be gone.

I had seen nothing like it before. Perhaps it was the wondrous haschish with which Monte Christo regaled his guests in the palace-cave. It would at least be something better than monkey *à l'odika*, this dainty which the man continued to eat with wide-open jaws and glaring eyes.

Success in experiment had made me rash. I tapped him on the shoulder, gave an amiable smile, and took the huge glutinous mouthful which he had intended for himself. *Bah! Phew!* out it came again, accompanied with many objurgations. 'Bring me some water, Mongilomba,' I spluttered; 'this infernal fool has been eating soap and red pepper!' And as I rinsed out my mouth I quite wondered that it was not in a lather, while the pepper burnt it like a flame. 'He no be soap, sir,' replied Mongilomba; 'he grow for bush; what time you see soap grow for bush?'

Mongilomba was right; the article in question is a fruit or root which tastes like yellow soap, and which is highly relished by the natives, who eat it boiled and seasoned as aforesaid: a fact which may be interesting to botanists, but which sadly interfered with my digestion.

I arranged with the king that we should go out net-hunting the next day, retired to bed on a mat, with a log for my pillow, awoke early, and went out in the brief twilight of the early morn. The first object that met my eye was Mongilomba, with a calabash of hot water, engaged in some mysterious operation. I drew near enough to see that he had been boring his ears. Through the holes he was passing two little wooden pegs smeared with palm oil. The wood distended the apertures; the oil alleviated the pain.

Having accomplished this, with many grimaces, which served to illustrate the proverb *Il faut souffrir pour être*

belle, he vigorously rubbed his teeth with a piece of stick, one end of which was chewed into a pulp. He then took up a small looking-glass, and stared at his extremely ugly face with a simple earnestness comical to behold. A gradual grin spread over his features, and he laid the mirror down with a perfect guffaw of self-complacency.

I thought that this would be the right moment to remind him that he had a master, and that his master had an appetite. He seemed displeased at this ill-bred interruption, and imperiously ordered the king's women to clean a pot and get a fire ready. A white cock was offered for sale, and after much haggling bought for some tobacco. As these birds can only be caught at roosting time I shot it with my rifle, on which one of the natives exclaimed, 'Heigh! dis be debbil man! He no take flint, and he kill wid one ball in 'm gun!'

I now went to superintend the cuisine, for Mongilomba, who was subject to fits of abstraction, had once forgotten to remove from a fowl that which we appreciate only in woodcock and snipe.

The women assembled in a shed which served as the public kitchen, and prepared the fire. Four half-burnt logs were placed with their charred ends radiating towards a common point. At this point the hollow space was filled with live ashes, dry leaves, and sticks. A woman's breath served as bellows, and soon kindled a brisk flame. A clay pot, half filled with water, was then produced; the bottom was lined with plantain leaves, which saved the trouble of cleaning it; the fowl was plucked, drawn,

quartered, and thrown in. Meanwhile, another royal lady was pounding the kernels of a certain nut into a paste, using as mortar a thick slab of wood, and as pestle a round hard fruit about double the size of an orange. Another went off to a bush near at hand, and picked off some peppers, which glittered like fuchsia buds upon it: the paste and peppers were thrown in and stirred; and then it was dished up in the wash-hand basin, this article of crockeryware being used in Africa exclusively for the service of the table.

A cup of tea concluded my repast, and I then enquired if my companions were ready for the chase; but they had been so intently watching my breakfast that they had not yet thought of their own, for the making of tea was always a public entertainment. As soon as they had despatched their plantains and cassada, we started for the bush, accompanied by two dogs with wooden rattles round their necks, and by a woman who was painted a bright red from top to toe, and who carried a basket on her head. I was just going to ask what she was for, when I saw a stranger being still. This was a man so completely crippled that he could move only on all-fours; and yet he carried the seven nets and scrambled along as quickly as the others walked. There was something so eager and even anxious in his manner—it was so evident he wished to prove he was as good a man as the others, in spite of his infirmity, that I turned to Mongilomba, and said with a missionary air, 'Is it not good of that poor fellow, instead of staying idle at home,

to work just as hard as an able-bodied man?' 'I should think he does,' replied Mongilomba; 'this people would very soon kill him if he did not.' And he looked at me out of the corner of his eye, as much as to say, 'How very green you are!'

Such is the primitive Commune! Nobody is allowed to exist unless he makes himself useful. The weakly infant is suppressed; the diseased or disabled adult is removed; and as for the old people, as soon as they begin to tell long stories, and can no longer gather sticks or draw water, they are put to death. Among these economical tribes the only hospital, the only poorhouse, is the grave.

The toils were set so as to form a barrier several hundred yards in length, and the men beat up towards it with the dogs. Then the nets were taken up and pitched in another place. Thus many trials were made without result. I had not seen a single head of game, and expressed my contempt of African sport in no measured terms. 'Softly, softly, and we go catch monkey,' said Mongilomba. 'But I don't want to catch monkey,' I replied. However, he explained to me that he had spoken in a parable, and that success was not yet to be despaired of. Again the toils were spread, and I took out my note-book, like the younger Pliny, in the hope of, at all events, bagging an idea.[1]

[1] 'Whilst I sat at my nets you would have found me not with my spear but my pencil and tablet by my side. I mused and wrote, being resolved, if I returned with my hands empty, at least to come home with my memoranda full.'—Book i. Letter vi.

However, at last there was a cry of triumph, and, hastening to the spot, I found a reddish-coloured doe struggling in the net, sometimes giving a short bark and snapping its teeth with rage. I had ordered that nothing should be killed till I had seen it; but I had no desire to undertake the taming of a shrew, and so at once gave the signal of its death. It was slain with an axe: the head was tucked through the fore legs and tied to the hind legs, and thus being made a bundle, it was crammed into a basket and strapped on the back of the Scarlet Lady, who had attended us, it seems, in case of such a contingency. So menial an occupation as the porterage of game is not relished by the noble savage. On one occasion a man at Bapuku refused to guide me to a plantation, about three miles distant from the village, for fear I should kill some game on the way and compel him to carry it. And yet it has often been asserted that the negroes are incapable of foresight!

It was to one of those plantations that I went on my return, which took place next day, as the hunters refused to go out again while there was meat in the town. I had been informed by the people of Bapuku that the elephants came every night to pluck the plantains and root up the cassada, and that thereby the villagers were reduced almost to starvation.

An African plantation is formed on the principle of a backwood clearing, but in a very incomplete manner; and this is perhaps the only part of the world where a man goes up a tree to cut it down. Passing a hoop,

made of a creeper, round the tree and his own waist, he slowly jerks himself up to a height of twelve feet or so from the ground, where the trunk of the tree is comparatively small, hacks it in two with his rude axe, and jumps down nimbly, the tree descending in one direction, the woodman in the other. The trees lie where they fall: all that is done is to burn off the branches; then come the women, who prod holes in the ground, plant plantains and cassada, and Nature does the rest.

There are usually two or three huts on a plantation, where the women sleep in the hole-prodding season. Having arrived at the plantation with Abauhi and a native of Bapuku, I took possession of a hovel, much to the disgust of two aged hags dwelling therein. However, I gave them tobacco, Abauhi gave them polite words, and the ogresses, appeased, went off to another hut. My cork bed was laid out, and on it a native pillow stuffed with fragrant herbs; so that, as Abauhi remarked, 'When you go to sleep you hear the sweet smell.' Night approached, and I took my dinner—a handful of parched ground-nuts and a cup of tea.

I had already walked round the plantation, and found but one elephant's track, a week old. I was clearly the victim of African exaggeration; but that had happened so often that I was now inured to it. I had by this time discovered that black men are fond of telling white lies; I never believed anything, and so was never disappointed. I also consoled myself with the reflection that I should enjoy a better night's rest where I was

than in the town: even at that distance I could hear the regular steam-hammer-like thumping of the eternal drum.

At first, owing to the strength of my tea, or the lightness of my repast, I did not feel inclined for bed. Seating myself on the trunk of a fallen tree, I listened to the tiger-cat's melancholy cry, and the hooting of the forest birds. Presently these sounds were hushed: the sea-breeze, which had rustled the leaves of the forest, died away: all Nature held her breath, and above the trees, which stood black against the sky, arose a red and sullen moon.

The atmosphere was hot and close: I breathed with difficulty: a dull drowsy feeling fell upon me, and, going to bed, I fell asleep at once.

I was awoke by the rumbling of thunder, and the wind howling in the distance. The men opened their sleepy eyes, rubbed them, and hastily made up the fire. We could see the lightning through the chinks, and the tornado approached us with a dreadful sound. As it burst upon us there was a report like a musket shot close to the door. I could have sworn it was a gun. '*Who that?*' cried Abauhi, starting up. He was answered by a loud struggling crash, and the squeeshing of innumerable leaves. The two men gave a yell and tore out of the hut, I after them, though I knew not why. The first moment in the open air nearly took my breath away, so fiercely fell the rain. It was as heavy as a douche, and the large violent drops made

my hands and face smart as if they had been hailstones. Meantime I continued to follow my men through brake and bramble at a tearing pace, till I became curious to know the cause of our stampede. But as soon as I stopped, Abauhi cried out, 'Do you love me? Do you love me? Do not stay there!'

'Why not?' said I sulkily, for I had just fallen among thorns.

'Look!' he said with a superb gesture; 'you no see that tree?'

I looked, and saw a tree torn in half by the wind, the upper part falling to the ground, while the lower part remained standing, gaunt and bare as a sepulchral stone.

The tree must have been cut half way through, in the manner above described, and the woodman's work completed by the wind. This explanation did not occur to me at the time, and an incident which seemed at defiance with natural laws was startling enough.

The thunder was terrific. Sometimes it encircled the horizon with a long, continuous, booming sound, as if something was rolling round the firmament. Sometimes it burst into sharp, stunning reports, with a sound like the whizzing of shot and shell a few yards above our heads, or as if ten thousand cartloads of stones had been thrown down in mid air. These awful crashes of the clouds, unlike anything one hears in England, made me tremble in spite of myself, and the natives, flinging their clenched hands towards the sky, exclaimed: 'Njambi! Njambi! let us live!'

An African Tornado.

Abauhi was not the less sedulous of the two in these pagan prayers. In fine weather a good Christian, he returned to heathenism when it blew tornadoes.

The air was one great flame. The lightning seemed to stay in the sky. It was of all colours, white, red, yellow, blue, and of all kinds. Sheet lightning in a broad lurid blaze; chain lightning in its most fantastic forms; forked lightning, as it carried livid death from sky to earth—all these we saw in several parts of the heavens at the same time. Abauhi, who feared thunder, looked at the lightning with indifference; but his terror on finding blue sparks in his companion's wool defies description.

Tornadoes happily do not last long, and we soon returned to our hut. Then the men took off their waist-cloths, wrung them out, rubbed themselves down, and were as well as ever. But I shivered in my wet clothes.

We waited for the dawn. At times a sturdy branch would fall to the ground, yielding only when the foe had passed. Then we heard shouts and reports of guns. This was being done at a neighbouring plantation to frighten away the elephants—the plantation, by-the-by, to which I should have been taken, had not my guide, preferring a short walk, remained at the one that was nearest to the town. As soon as day broke I went out. An enormous branch had fallen within three yards of our hut, so that we had had a narrow escape. While I was looking at the tree, an animal, which I supposed to be a bat, flew from it and perched upon another tree

at twenty yards' distance, giving a peculiar curve when it alighted, as the flying fish does on entering the sea. To my amazement it then changed into a four-footed creature, which ran up and down the tree with incredible rapidity. It was a flying squirrel.

When we came near the town, some women washing in the brook rushed off with hideous yells. An English holloa brought them to, and they explained to us, laughing, that being at war with a neighbouring clan they had taken us for skirmishers. Ambuscades are often laid to capture women at the brook, and the African braves are not above making a pot shot in such a case: for if women do not fight, they produce those who do; thus, by shooting a few young and possibly prolific females, the warriors diminish the number of males their children will have to contend with—which is very thoughtful and considerate.

No wonder that the hunters at the Shekani village were welcomed so tenderly when they returned from the forest! These bush-people, like the wild beasts, live in continual danger, for they are always at war. The men who go out hunting, the women who go with their pitchers to the brook, are never sure that they will return.

But, besides their real and ordinary dangers, they believe themselves to be encompassed by evil and malignant spirits, who may at any moment spring upon them in the guise of a leopard, or cast down upon them the branch of a tree. In order to propitiate these in-

visible beings, their lives are entangled with intricate rites, and turned this way or that way as oracles are delivered, or omens appear. It is difficult to describe, or even to imagine, the tremulous condition of the savage mind, yet it can clearly be seen from their aspect and manners that they exist in a state of never-ceasing dread.

Not only the existence of the individual is precarious in these savage clans or communes, but also the existence of the clan itself. The people who now inhabit the lowlands of the Coast originally came from the hills of the interior, and are rapidly decreasing in their new abode. The curse of barrenness falls upon their villages; they number the names of clans which have died away, and from their melancholy fate anticipate their own. Then in their peril and distress they call upon their ancestors to save them. Assembling on the brink of a mountain brow or on the skirt of some dense forest, and extending their arms to the sky, while the women are wailing and the very children weep, they cry to the spirits of those who have passed away.

We found the plantains of the village gardens torn up by the roots, and half the houses flat upon the ground. No one would have supposed that those prostrate masses of wood, misshapen and blackened by rain, had once been human dwellings. Nor would one have supposed that those were the owners who were chattering, laughing, and evidently appreciating all that was ridiculous in their own misfortunes as keenly as

their dearest friends could have done. What an old writer said of the negroes is perfectly true: 'In weal and in woe they are always the same, and it is only by their clothing one can tell whether they are mourning or rejoicing.' Providence, it seems, has given gaiety to these poor wretches to enable them to bear their miserable lives.

My hut had not been blown down, but the rain had entered through the roof. In Africa the sun is a tyrant: yet, like all tyrants, he bestows some blessings. I longed for his warmth and light, but the clouds would not move away. The ground was wet, the bed was wet, the wood was wet. I cowered over a few spluttering sticks, and presently fell into a restless slumber. I went to sleep a man, and awoke—a child. The captain of the bark came in, and, seeing my pale face, invited me aboard; I opened my mouth to answer, talked a little gibberish, and fainted. A cup of water dashed into my face brought me round, and I was carried by four Krumen to the beach in a chair. As I was being helped into the boat, Mongilomba crept up to me mysteriously, and whispered in my ear,

'Sir, Mr. Reade, if that captain give you medicine, just ask him to drink a little first himself.'

THE CANNIBALS

THE great dramatist relates that when Don Juan was carried off to the infernal regions, his faithful attendant Sganarelle displayed his grief at that event by exclaiming, '*Ah, mes gages! mes gages!* The tender solicitude which Mongilomba displayed on my behalf was due to the same disinterested motives. If I happened to die, he would probably lose the wages that were due to him, and also the person from whom wages in the future were to come. Hence the advice which he gave me, and which made me laugh when I thought of it afterwards, as being so characteristic of the African. On all parts of the Coast a negro never offers a drink without tasting of it first to show it is not poisoned. But there was more in Mongilomba's warning than I then supposed.

I passed a week on board the vessel, and by that time was convalescent, though rather shaky in the knees. It seemed to me strange that the captain still remained at Bapuku. The natives, he knew, had spent the 'trust,' and could not now buy the native produce if they wished. I therefore enquired why he did not go away. When I asked this question of the mate, he looked at the carpenter: the carpenter looked back at the mate, and I received no reply.

The captain was in the habit of speaking against the mate with a pertinacity which I could not understand. He would call me aside at every available moment, and tell me how much trouble he had with him, and what a curse it was to have a drunken officer on board. 'You would not think, sir,' said he, 'that Mr. Jones had been a master, but he has. Yes, sir, that man's had a ship of his own—a ship of his own. Oh, what a curse is drunkenness! It was only the other day that I told him if he went on so, I couldn't give him a character to the owners. Then he'd have to go before the mast, as many and many a drunken officer has done before him; and I asked him what his wife and his poor children would do then. And he burst out a-crying, and said he would give it up—yes, he *would* give it up. What is the matter, steward?'

Here the Malay showed his master a key, and said that he had found it in Mr. Jones's berth, while he was cleaning it out: he thought that it was the key of the locker.

'That can't be, for I have the key of the locker in my pocket. Why, it's a duplicate key! Ah! sir, he's a bad man—a bad man. Steward, see whether there is any beer gone.'

The steward opened the locker with the duplicate key, and said that all the beer was gone. The captain turned up the whites of his eyes at a large pumpkin hanging over his head. 'May the Lord forgive him! Three dozen of beer that man must have drunk. It's a wonder he's alive. But if his liver ain't jaundiced here,

it's because it must frizzle down below for ever and ever and amen! Oh! sir, is it not indeed awful, the revenge of the Almighty?'

The mate was a red-faced, bottle-nosed old tar, with a rough-and-ready way about him which might have been assumed (nothing is oftener assumed by artful knaves), but which certainly prepossessed me in his favour. His grog blossoms had sprung from a moist soil, no doubt; but I had always seen him sober: and this was the answer I invariably made when harassed with the captain's confidences. To which he would reply that Mr. Jones had now brought his health to such a state that he *could not* drink any spirituous liquors.

The skipper *himself* was a short, pale-faced man, with a dull eye, and his mouth always a little open, like a fish. I knew that he was Scotch or north country by his drawling tone and his manner of relieving dorsal irritation. He drank nothing but water, and had a shaking hand—probably the result of repeated fevers.

He was frequently ill, and after I had seen his method of treatment I could only wonder that he remained alive. It was the most ludicrous and painful sight I ever witnessed. He had given himself a colic with some medicinal poison, and was lying on the after-lockers, with 'The Companion to the Medicine Chest' before him.

At first he could not find *colic*, which happened in that book to be spelt *cholic*. But he was not to be baulked; he turned to diarrhœa, and treated himself for that. Soon afterwards, while turning over the leaves

in case anything might strike his fancy, he fell upon *cholic*, and immediately had the prescription mixed. Finding no relief within the space of an hour he adopted the second treatment. This went on for two days. At short intervals we would hear a sepulchral voice from below, 'Steward, bring me the medicine-book, and my eye-glass.' Then it would be, 'Steward, I think I'll take a little so-and-so,' or 'Steward, I'll try a glass of such-and-such a medicine to-day.' Sometimes it was quinine, sometimes rhubarb, sometimes laudanum or ether, or antibilious pills (eight to a dose), and once—only once—it was croton oil. I was surprised to see him come on deck again; but the mate assured me that this time his treatment had been comparatively mild. Unhappily his patients had not such strong 'physical' constitutions.

One evening a sailor came to him and said that he was teased with spitting of blood. 'I never heard of such a thing,' growled the captain, and looked upon the man as a *lusus naturæ*. 'Have you got pains anywhere?' The man replied that he had pains in his head. 'Well, if you have pains in the head, that shows it comes from the head;' and, turning to me, he explained that the bleeding came down from the head into the mouth by channels. 'Ah!' thought I to myself, 'there is only one Channel you understand.'

Shortly after this the carpenter was down, and declined the captain's tenders of quinine with a polite firmness, which at first amused and then astonished me.

I offered him some of my own, and he accepted it at once. Now I remembered Mongilomba's advice, and now I remembered, that though the mate and carpenter had never spoken to me against the captain, they did not address him except when duty required. And every evening they would stand by the main-shrouds, talking together in a low voice, and always stopping when I approached them in my walk to and fro upon the poop. There was some mystery in all this, from which that Malay, with his sinister eyes and soft cat-like steps, I felt sure could not be absent. But soon these thoughts were driven from my mind. The Bapuku people starved the captain out at last; the blue peter was hoisted, and a gentle wind bore us to Corisco, where I was welcomed with bright faces, and blackberry jam, from Pennsylvania, was brought out in my honour. The captain also came on shore, and I was much edified with his attitude at family prayers. His eyes reverentially closed, and, one hand before his face, he seemed to drink in the holy words, and joined in the responses with a voice as unlike that in which he swore at the Krumen as one can well conceive.

One morning Mongilomba came and said that a 'Gaboon boy' was outside, and requested an interview. He wished to be my cook, a vacancy in my retinue of which Mongilomba, the temporary substitute, had frequently reminded me. The young man's names were Cabinda and Robert, for all civilised negroes have a European cognomen. He had been ship's cook in a

voyage to Liverpool, and another to New York. He had seen air balloons, railways, and snow. He garnished his discourse with nautical oaths, and professed a love of adventure, an indifference to danger, and a great predilection for myself.

Such a man was irresistible. I engaged him at three dollars a month, on the agreement that I would double his pay if he accompanied me among the cannibals of the Upper Gaboon (which Mongilomba had declined to do), and that he should forfeit the whole of his previous pay if he refused.

I now crossed over to the Muni, went up that river about fifty miles, and found myself amongst the most squalid set of savages that I had ever seen. They lived in low filthy huts, and many of them wore only fresh plucked leaves—a mode of apparel which excited the disgust of the refined Cabinda. None of them had seen a white man before; but they had not even curiosity. It rained almost incessantly; I was nearly always in the open air; and when sometimes I slept in the bush I would wake so giddy that I could scarcely stand. My boots turned to black pulp, and my feet, being continually soaked in putrid water, began to give way. All this was in the hopes of meeting a gorilla; and all was in vain. That ape is rare in the Muni Country, and Bapuku is said to be the northern boundary of its habitat, so far as the Coast regions are concerned. But the sea-board between Gaboon and Camaroons is utterly unknown in a scientific sense.

When I returned to the village, I found little to recompense me for the fatigues and disappointments which I had undergone. There were no songs or merry dances to the sound of the drum and the clapping of female hands. The night was twelve hours long; and hard were they to pass. Even vegetable food was scarce; and I remember Robert's face as he came to me one day with a plantain mashed up in a doughy state, not unlike the stick-jaw of old-fashioned schools. 'Eat this, sir,' said he; 'he no good for mouth, but he fill 'm belly.'

Lastly, before we went away my powder flask was stolen. I took my double-barrel and went up to the palaver-house, and threatened (being young) to destroy the town if it was not immediately restored, but I suspect that this hostile declaration was not faithfully interpreted. I was given to understand that my *present*, or, in other words, the payment I offered for my board and lodging, was not esteemed sufficient: I must make it more, and then my powder-flask would be returned. This accordingly was done, and I left the Muni Country without regret. Robert and I had each of us a slight attack of fever at the same time and to the same extent.

Captain Stewart's successor lived on board a hulk just off the island on which the tragedy had taken place. We found the bark also lying there; for trust had been given in the Muni as well as at Bapuku. I had left some of my things on board, so went to fetch them away. The captain was on board the hulk: I went

down into the cabin, handed over my travel-battered canister to the steward, and requested him to make me some tea.

When he brought it me he said there had been 'an awful row,' and spun a long yarn. As he spoke in a low voice, for fear of being overheard, and as I, not caring for servants' scandal, did not listen, it was thrown away upon me. Presently the mate came down and said, 'Have you any trade powder with you, Mr. Reade?' 'I have one barrel,' said I. 'Then look after it, sir, whatever you do; for that man has said he'll blow up the ship.'

I looked in mild astonishment at the Malay. His thin lips were pinched together.

'There is my report of the matter, carpenter,' said the mate to that dignitary, who had just come below. 'If you think it'll do, why I'll copy it into the log-book, now I'm about it.'

The carpenter took the slate out of the chief officer's hand and read it out in an under-tone. It was as nearly as I can remember as follows :—

'*April* 28.—The mate having given the steward an order in the absence of the captain, the steward answered that he would see him damned first. When the mate repeated the order and called him a saucy fellow, he ran into his bunk, where he had two guns ready loaded, and aimed one of them at me, but providentially it missed fire. I had him put into irons. At two o'clock, P.M., the master came on board in a state of beastly

intoxication, and ordered the steward to be taken out of irons, although he had threatened to shoot me and blow up the ship as soon as he was loose. As they were taking the irons off him, the master, seeing he was mad-drunk, asked where he had got the liquor from, and when he found the steward had stolen some rum which he kept for his private use, he snatched up an axe, and would have killed the man on the spot, had not the ship's carpenter canted off the blow with his arm.'

Having taken my tea, and expressed my sympathy with the mate and carpenter, under these trying circumstances, I paddled over to the hulk, where the last doubts I might have had as to who was the drunkard were dispelled. The master was lying on a sofa with an empty brandy bottle by his side. He explained to me that he was prevented, by some mysterious impediment, from rising, as politeness suggested, and that there were sensations in his head which he was at a loss to understand. Muttering something about his poor steward who had been put into irons by his drunken mate, and asking me if I had shot any 'gurril-l-las,' he dropped off into a swinish sleep.

Afterwards the bark went on to Gaboon; and then the officers and crew declined the further pleasure of their captain's company. It seems that while they were in Brass, the second mate, who had quarrelled with the captain, and had threatened to expose his goings on, was taken with the fever; and the captain gave him, by way

of a composing draught, a tumbler of laudanum and brandy, half and half. The captain acknowledged that he was drunk when he administered the medicine, but the carpenter and mate politely maintained that on that occasion he was sober. They were all against the poor calumniated man except the Malay—even supposing the affair of the axe had not altered that youth's affections. The captain was advised to leave the ship while he *could*: he did so, and the mate took her home.

I now left the island of Corisco and returned to Baraka. I intended to visit the Fans or Panwe, a tribe of cannibals who dwell on the banks of the Ncomo, or Upper Gaboon, in the bosom of the Crystal Mountains. These people came out of the interior in 1852, and are gradually spreading down towards the coast. A few years ago an incident occurred which proved their cannibal propensities beyond a doubt, and obtained them the hatred of the Coast tribes. The Mpongwe bury their dead in a prairie or savannah, by the water-side, some distance up the Gaboon, and, in accordance with a custom almost universal amongst savages, they place within the graves the favourite weapons or ornaments of the deceased, with a good stock of clothes and domestic utensils by way of outfit for the Under-world. Now, a party of Fans came by night to the burying-ground, opened all the graves, took out all the treasures, and happened to find a newly-buried corpse. This also they purloined, and having come to a convenient place, under the shelter of some mangroves, boiled the body in one of the pots they had just dis-

interred, and ate it on the very spot where I was first told the story.[1]

This proceeding led to a palaver and a war: the Fans became proverbial for all that was fierce and disgusting. Women threatened their naughty children that the Panwe should come and eat them; and many a tale of their savage prowess was related at the fireside. Mongilomba gave up a good place rather than go with me among them; and Robert now became my steward.

Like all men suddenly raised to distinction, he had a host of enemies, who soon contrived that I should learn his antecedents. 'Robert,' I said to him one day, at the Gaboon, 'I thought that Cabinda was your country name?'

'Yes, sir; my country name Cabinda.'

'How is it that everybody calls you *Oshupu* here? I never hear anyone call you Cabinda.'

(With a puzzled face) 'Oshupu, sir?' (Brightening) 'Oh, yes!—Oshupu—that one name of play my friends like to call me. I not know why they no call me Cabinda, because Cabinda my proper name, for true.'

'Were you ever cook at a white man's factory, Robert?'

'No, sir,' replied Robert, coldly.

'When a man runs away with another man's wife, what do you think of that man, Robert?'

'I think him bad man, sir.'

'Very well; and why do you think him a bad man?'

[1] This incident was mentioned by M. Du Chaillu.

'When white man want wife, sir, he go look, he see girl he like, he go take him. Same way, s'pose little dog want wife: he go town, he see other little dog; he like him; other little dog say, "I like you;" they say that with nose, sir. Then *palaver set!* (the affair arranged). But we country fashion (here Robert drew himself up) no same as that. S'pose I want wife; I go to man and say, "I want marry your son——"'

'His son!'

'No, sir, him you call—not him son—when him son be girl——'

'Daughter.'

'Yes, sir, him—him—da-ughter. Well, he say, "Gib me plenty money, my friend, and you can have him." So I pay plenty dash; my wife come; she go work my garden; she go cook my dinner; she go give me son that be girl; and I sell him when he get big, for plenty dash too. Black man's wife same as white man's money. S'pose man take wife he take money; he bad man too much.'

'I shall ask you one more question, Robert. Why did you say the other day that Corisco was a bad place, and that you were glad to get away?'

'I can't tell you lie, sir, because you clever too much. Why I no like Corisco, those Benga boys frighten me. They say, "You Gaboon boy, you come we country; you take our white man. Some day you get palaver you no like."'

'Now, Robert,' said I, 'your country name is not

Cabinda, but Oshupu. You are guilty of an alias. (Here Robert looked ashamed.) You were cook at ——'s factory. You were caught stealing, and sent to prison at the French fort. When you came out you ran off with another man's wife, and had to hide yourself in Corisco. When you were at Corisco you had another "wife palaver," and it was only by the husband's forgiving you (for one dollar) that you were able to get away at all. Now, I don't care how much you stole before I took you, or how much you steal after I leave you, but if I lose anything while you are my steward, I shall take it out of your wages. Secondly, you may get into wife palavers if you like, but don't think that I shall get you out of them. We are going to the Bush now; if a Bushman catches you, what does he do?'

'Locks me up in house, sir, and puts my feet in Wood. Then my friends pay plenty dash.'

'What do you call plenty dash?'

'One gun,' said Oshupu, in the tone of a man reading out an inventory, 'one chest, three pieces satin-stripe, six brass rods, two mugs, one basin, one half-barrel powder.'

'Very good; and if your friends don't pay?'

'Then the Bushman kill me,' said Oshupu.

'Well, he may kill you and eat you afterwards, for all I care, my dear Robert,' said I; 'so now I think we understand each other.'

There is an African proverb, that if you pull out of the fire every stick that does not burn well, you will

soon have no fire left; and the moral is to this effect, that if you turn off a servant for a single offence or a single defect, you will soon be without any servants. Refusing to engage a negro because he had once committed theft would be absurd; it would be like leaving comfortable lodgings because a little tea and sugar had disappeared from the caddy. The negroes do not think it wrong to steal from the white man, and steal they must; the best way is to look well after property of value, and to let them pilfer little things, such as beads and tobacco. Oshupu's taste for intrigue occasioned me more annoyance. I did not so much object to his making presents with my beads—though he was always the soul of liberality—as to a palaver among the Fans. It was all very well to threaten, but I could not desert my interpreter; and that, doubtless, he knew as well as myself. However, he gave me no trouble in the above respect, and, all things considered, stole with moderation.

We could not get any Mpongwe canoemen, so Oshupu brought me four strangers from Cape Lopez, who were on a visit to Gaboon. I asked them if they would be afraid to go with me among cannibals. They said they would go with me wherever I chose. Accordingly I made out an agreement, whereby they were to receive a shilling a day (current goods), but to forfeit the whole of their wages if they refused to enter the country of the Fans. At the foot of this document I wrote their names, and, after they had signified before witnesses their full comprehension of its contents, I put

a pen between their fingers, and guided them to form a cross. This being done, each man glared awe-struck at the work of his own hand, and went off loudly discussing the mysteries of black and white.

As I felt confident of safety among savages who had never seen a white man, I did not arm myself, taking only a huge duck gun (unloaded), to be borne behind me as an emblem of dignity and power. It was my desire to discover the rapids of the Ncomo, or upper main stream of the Gaboon, which a French naval officer and an American missionary had attempted to reach, without success; and also to examine the cannibal question, though the missionaries assured me that there was no question about the matter; and they had had a station for some time on the borders of the Fan country. The mission had not been a success: and the cannibals had gutted the mission house, on account of some grievance, real or assumed.

Their station was on a little island, Nenge-Nenge. I found the mission house still standing; and three white tombs among the grass. Such are the only monuments upon the Coast, and in the Settlements a thriving and well-populated cemetery is always shown to visitors as one of the sights. Before a new arrival has finished his dessert at his first dinner ashore, somebody is sure to bend over the table, and ask him with a grin if he would like to go and see the graves.

Nenge-Nenge was sixty miles up the Gaboon, which here loses its name Orongo, and is called the Ncomo.

It also receives a tributary, the Boqué, which Burton had traced to its source close by, a short time before.[1]

The island stood at the confluence; and here was the frontier of the Fans. We were in the Bakele country; and it was necessary to engage two Bakele who could not only speak their own language, but also Mpongwe and Fan; and who would assist in paddling the canoe against the difficult stream we should have to encounter. There were some Christian Bakele who said that they would be most happy to go on the morrow, but did not wish to break 'him Sabby day.' I accordingly agreed to wait; but on explaining to my pious friends that they would have to paddle for some days without intermission, they speedily backed out. Like many other people who are not Bakele, however severely they may read the injunction, 'On the seventh day ye shall rest,' they close their eyes to the first command, 'Six days shall ye labour.'

And now my four Cape Lopez men came up and tendered their resignation. I asked them the reason. They had just heard, they replied, that the people of the Ncomo 'chopped man;' they did not like that fashion, and they would rather not go. All this was said as coolly as if I had not told them beforehand we were going among cannibals; as if they had not been engaged for that express purpose, and because Mpongwe men could not be obtained. However, I knew that to argue with

[1] See his excellent paper, 'A Day among the Fans,' in the Transactions of the Ethnological Society.

them would be useless, and said they could go where they pleased. 'Would I take them back?' said they. 'Take them back!' said I, raising my eyebrows, 'oh dear no, I am going the other way.' 'Would I give them chop?' 'No, why should I give chop to men who did not belong to my canoe?' This severe logic discomfited them rather; they had no means of getting food.

But, after all, the interpreter was the difficulty; if one could not be found, I should not be able to go among the Fans, and it would then be said that I had turned back from fear. In the midst of my dismal cogitations, I saw a small canoe push off from the south side of the river. As soon as it touched the land, a young slave sprang out, and handed me a letter. It was an invitation to dinner, written in good English, and signed *John Ragenji*. He was sub-trader to one of the Gaboon agents; I immediately ordered my canoe, and was paddled up to the factory door.

Ragenji was seated in his bamboo piazza, in company with another small trader. He had a good-natured mouth, a sweet voice, and sly, small eyes. He welcomed me with a grand show of cordiality, and requested me to look upon his house and furniture as my personal property, and upon himself as my devoted slave.

The other man's name was Tibbett. He was an American negro, who had returned to his mother-land, and had gracefully conformed to her customs by marrying fifteen times. He was in charge of a factory up the Boqué, and had been Captain Burton's cicerone. He

wished me also to go up the Boqué, that he might make something out of the job. Ragenji, for similar reasons, preferred me to go up the Ncomo.

John did the honours in great style, but fell into the common error of apologising for the meagreness of a better dinner than he usually served, and perhaps took too much trouble to impress upon my mind that if I had dined with him in Glass Town he would have given me champagne. 'Hospitality,' writes some pompous fool, 'among civilised nations loses its purity from the ostentation which enters into all its actions.' Now, the hospitality of the savage is precisely that of an hotel. The hospitality of the half-civilised man is bestowed with the *ne plus ultra* of vulgarity. I have met with hospitality from negroes in the position of Ragenji, but they had learnt it from Europeans.

After the dinner was over, we drank bottled beer till John became quite 'laughful,' as he expressed it. This I thought a propitious moment to request his assistance and advice. 'I want two Bakele,' said I, 'who can talk Mpongwe and Fan between them.' He sent out a slave to make enquiries.

Tibbett had grown as sad over his beer as John had grown merry. 'You should not go up the Ncomo,' said he, 'the Panwe there are very wild. You had much better come up my river.' I laughed at him, and John poured me out some more beer.

'Yes, we are gay now,' said Tibbett, gloomily; 'I hope we shall all be happy to-morrow.'

Here Ragenji blew his nose with his fingers, and

then passed a cambric handkerchief lightly across his nostrils.

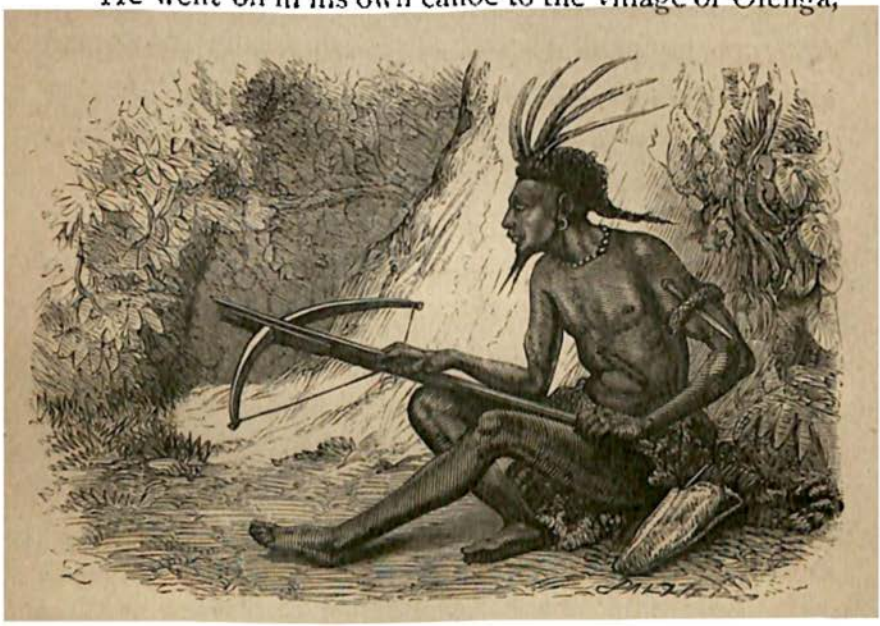
'It grieves me to the heart,' continued the specious Tibbett, 'to see you going amongst those people; they will be sure to make you trouble.'

What with his forebodings and John's genteel manners I spent a very pleasant evening, in the course of which John whispered to me not to mind Tibbett, 'who talk nonsense plenty because he wish you in his river;' while Tibbett observed to me, in the momentary absence of his host, that John was a good man, but was not my friend in helping me up the Ncomo.

In the morning the two Bakele were ready. John and I did a little business, which paid him for the dinner. My Cape Lopez men returned to their allegiance, and we started at midday. After twelve miles the Sierra del Crystal from blue became green, and the current from the source began to struggle with the tide from the sea; or rather there were two streams—one in the middle going up, one under the bank coming down. Here a Fan called to us from the right-hand bank, and said that we must not pass without trading at his town. The Bakele interpreter replied that we were not come to trade, but to see the river. The Fan said that he would examine our goods and go with us as far as the next village, to know if what we said was true. This far-sighted individual was soon alongside of us in a rude little wobbling canoe. When he had proved by inspection that my stock of merchandise was small, I told him in English—

which was translated into Mpongwe, which was translated into Dikele, which was translated into Fan—that he was a fine young man, and paddled exceedingly well. We were going to the end of the river, and if he liked to join us I would give him a brass rod a day; on which he assented, with a grin which exposed two rows of villanous filed teeth.

He went on in his own canoe to the village of Olenga,



where I intended to pass the night. A large crowd collected at the landing-place. The sight of these Fans reminded me of the pictures of Red Indians which I had seen in books. They wore coronets on their heads adorned with the tail feathers of the touraco. Their figures were slight: their complexion coffee-colour; their upper jaws protruding gave them a rabbit-mouthed

appearance. Their hair was longer and thicker than that of the Coast tribes; on their two-pointed beards were strung red and white beads. Their only covering was a strip of goat skin, or sometimes that of a tiger-cat hanging tail downwards: more often still, a kind of cloth made from the inner bark of a tree; on the left upper arm a bracelet of fringed skin, and sometimes a knife therein. Some of them carried paddles, perhaps from affectation, as the water is not their element; others had cross-bows made of ebony.

In their possession of these weapons,[1] and also a currency of iron *à la* Sparta, in their cannibal practices, their ingenious method of entrapping elephants alive in a *nglaîl* or decoy—presently to be described—and lastly, in their physical appearance, the Fans differ from the other tribes of the Gaboon. One might, therefore, fairly infer that they belong to a family of tribes distinct in origin from the Shekani, Bakele, and Mpongwe. But the evidence of language completely overthrows

[1] The cross-bow is said to have been unknown to the Saracens before the Crusades. It was afterwards adopted by the Moors of Spain, and employed, according to Leo Africanus, by the Arab merchants who crossed the Sahara to Soudan. Burton, in his 'Wit and Wisdom of Western Africa,' quotes a proverb, which shows that it was once used in Yoruba, and probably gave place to fire-arms, as happened in Europe, and as will soon be the case among the Fans, for the only specimen I obtained in the Ncomo was broken and disused, the musket having come into vogue. A currency of iron, resembling the currency among the Fans, is used in the Delta of the Niger (Baikie). The Fans cultivate tobacco, and unless that plant be indigenous in Africa, which is exceedingly improbable, it must have come to them indirectly from Barbary or Egypt. It is largely cultivated on the Niger plateau, and also in the backwoods of Liberia; and its culture falls into disuse whenever American tobacco can be easily obtained.

such a supposition. Their dialect is akin to the other dialects of the Gaboon. Fan, as a missionary once observed to me, is like Mpongwe cut in half: for instance, *njina* (gorilla) in Mpongwe, is *nji* in Fan. We must, therefore, conclude that the Coast tribes were originally a people like the Fans, and that, in consequence of their migration from the mountains to the plains, and their adoption of European weapons and goods, their customs have been changed. But how is it that these Fans, so nearly related, as their language proves, to the tribes of the alluvial regions, should yet differ from them in physical appearance? How is it that their skins are lighter in complexion, their hair longer, their features more aquiline, approaching the European type? It here first occurred to me that the black skin, protruding muzzle, and woolly hair of the negro, as commonly described, were not the rule in Africa, but the exception, and had been produced by conditions peculiar to low-lying lands. I came to the conclusion that the true or typical Africans are a copper-coloured race of the Egyptian type, with full lips, broad nostrils, nose somewhat depressed, and curly hair. Several years of study and travel have confirmed me in this belief, and Livingstone recently observed that 'I had hit the truth.'[1]

I was conducted as usual to the chief's house, and

[1] 'Winwood Reade hit the truth when he said the ancient Egyptian, with his large round black eyes, full luscious lips, and somewhat depressed nose, is far nearer the typical negro than the West Coast African, who has been debased by the unhealthy land he lives in.'—Dr. Livingstone's Second Letter to the 'New York Herald.'

it was soon surrounded by cannibals four deep. The small modicum of light which native architecture permits to come in by the door was intercepted by heads and feathers. At the same time every man talked as if he had two voices.

Oshupu obtained me a short respite by explaining to the crowd that it was the habit of the animal to come out and air itself, and to walk to and fro in the street of the village.

Being already hardened to this sort of thing, I went out at sunset, and sat before the door. Oshupu, squatting beside me and playing on a musical instrument, gave this proceeding the appearance of a theatrical entertainment. Never did simple yokels coming up to 'Lunnon' enjoy a better treat, and I was not less amused, for the spectators were themselves a sight. Here stood two men with their hands on each other's shoulders, staring at me in mute wonder, their eyes starting from their heads, and their mouths stationary yawns; there an old woman in a stooping attitude, with her hands on her knees, like a cricketer fielding out; and girls stood giggling and whispering together; and a man was dragging up his frightened wife to look at me; and a child cried bitterly, with averted eyes.

Night came, and when the full moon began to rise, a dance was celebrated in her honour. Two musicians came out to the middle of the street. One of them beat an instrument called *handja* by the Fans, *balafou* in Senegambia, *marimba* in Angola. It is on

the principle of an harmonicon: pieces of hard wood being struck with a stick, and the notes issuing from gourds of various sizes fastened below. The other had a drum in the shape of an hour-glass, which stood upon a pedestal, its skin made from an elephant's ear; it was beaten with the hand. The dancers, summoned by the music, came singing in procession from the forest. Their dance was uncouth: their song a solemn tuneless chaunt; they revolved in a circle, clasping their hands as if in prayer, adoring the moon, on whom their eyes were fixed, and sometimes stretching out their arms towards her.

The measure changed, and two women, covered with green leaves and the skins of wild beasts, danced into the midst. They accompanied their intricate steps with marvellous contortions of the body. The bystanders every now and then put some beads into their hands, and always in a stagy manner, as if they were acting to the moon. All night long the dance and the music did not cease. The musicians were relieved from time to time; but when I went down to my canoe in the morning, the same two women were performing, apparently with unabated ardour. Such strength and agility are due to training from the earliest years. I have seen a little girl scarcely old enough to walk, who could yet manage to wriggle her tiny body, and do a step or two, while the women sat round her, clapping their hands and singing over and over again: *Fear the he-goat, yah! yah! yah! Fear the he-goat, yah! yah! yah!*

Before I left the village I engaged another man, which gave me a crew of eight. I also purchased a smooth-skinned sheep; and upon this poor animal, as it lay shackled in the prow, many a hungry eye was cast. When it bleated the whole crew burst into one broad carnivorous grin.

Bushmen can sometimes enjoy a joint of stringy venison, an elephant's foot, a boiled monkey, or a grilled snake; but a sheep—a real domestic sheep—which had long been looked upon as the pride of the village, the envy of their poorer neighbours, which they had been in the habit of calling 'Brother!'—it was almost as good as eating a man! That a kind fate should have placed this delicacy within their reach was something too strong and unexpected for their feeble minds. They suddenly darted to the shore. To keep up appearances I ordered them to kill the sheep, for I saw they were going to do it without my consent. There was a yell of triumph, a broad knife steeped in blood, a silent struggle, then three fires blazed forth, three clay pots were placed thereon, and filled with the bleeding limbs of the deceased. On such occasions the negro is endowed with the energy and promptitude of the European.

In the evening we arrived at the village of Itchongué, and, having seen on the way the remains of a raft which had been used by the Fans in their migration, I resolved to collect as much information as I could about the country from which they had come. Summoning the

oldest man of the village, I gave him a little tobacco, promising him more when he had answered my questions. He told me that his tribe came from a country called Vinja, far away: the gorilla was there so common that you might hear its cry from the town. The people of that country wore the skin of goats. Fowls and goats were plentiful there. It was with them that the young men bought their wives. That was the country where the iron came from and the ivory too. Some of it was obtained, as in the Ncomo, by killing the elephants in a *nghûl*, but most of it as follows:—There was a large marsh or lake where, in the rainy season, the elephants came to bathe. They would often sink in the mud, and being unable to extricate themselves would die there. In the dry season the natives would collect the teeth, and send them down to the white men of the sea. The manner in which the Fans had migrated was on foot through the forest. They prepared large quantities of dried plantains, cassada, and various kinds of fruits. While they were travelling, the moon became dark eleven times. Their custom was to walk three days, to remain encamped about two days, and so on. The direction of Vinja, as I tested by the compass, was N.E. It is probable that the Fans had migrated along the mountain range parallel to the sea. But there is nothing in the above which would not be true of Livingstone's tribes to the west of Tanganyika.

Although the missionaries had been much among

the Fans, they never obtained a confession of cannibalism from them. But the Fans did not deny it of the Fans as a tribe; they merely denied it as regarded their own clan; *they* never ate men, but the people in the next village did. I accordingly exercised a little finesse in the investigation of the matter, and said nothing on the subject till we had passed the villages which had been previously visited by Europeans. I now asked the old man some questions about the people who lived beyond the mountains to the east. At last I said, 'Do they eat men?' 'Oh yes,' he replied, 'they all ate men. *And I eat men myself!*' As he volunteered this statement he burst into a loud roar of laughter, which we all joined very heartily. I then asked him if Man was good. He replied with a rapturous gesture that it was 'like monkey, all fat.' I asked him what was his favourite cut. He said that he had no choice. His words were precisely those which Charles Lamb employed in his glowing eulogy on sucking pig. '*He is good throughout. No part of him is better or worse than another.*' I then wished to learn the class of persons he had been in the habit of discussing. He said, only prisoners of war: some of his friends ate witches (when condemned to death), but he, for his part, did not think them wholesome. I asked him if the Fans ate their own relations when they died; he said that they could not do such a thing as that.

He now began to cross-examine me, for he thought that I also was a cannibal; a belief which is general

in the bush, first suggested by the slave trade, and artfully disseminated by the Coast people, to keep the tribes of the interior away from the white men. When I was in the Camma country, a Bakele slave, who had been brought down from the far interior, squatted before me a long time, staring with all his might, and finally exclaimed, with a gasp of wonder, '*And are these the men that eat us?*'

The old Fan was anxious to know why we took the trouble to send such a long way for people to eat. Were the black men nicer than the white men? My answer was dictated by motives of policy. I said that the flesh of the white man was a deadly poison, and that, therefore, we were obliged to import our supplies.

The practice of cannibalism is widely diffused upon the earth, and was probably at one time universal: its various kinds may be classified as follows:—1. The cannibalism of necessity. 2. The cannibalism of desire. 3. The cannibalism of theology. 4. The cannibalism of discipline or education. 5. The cannibalism of revenge.

1. The cannibalism of necessity belongs to all countries and to all times. Sieges, shipwrecks, and famines afford examples in horrible profusion, which may be studied in a multitude of narratives, from Josephus to Don Juan. No doubt the eating of human flesh originated in necessity, and, like many other kinds of food, was afterwards relished for itself alone.

2. There have undoubtedly existed many nations with whom cannibalism had become a practice of

gourmandise, purified by sentiment and consecrated by affection. Herodotus mentions an Indian people who killed their relatives as soon as they fell sick, lest their flesh should be spoiled. This custom is purely gastronomical, and appears unfeeling. But Heeren, in his 'Asiatic Nations,' mentions another tribe with whom this curious custom prevailed. As soon as a man had arrived at a certain age, he called together his relations and climbed up a tree: his children shook the tree, saying, 'The fruit is ripe and must be shaken down.' The old man then descended, and was eaten by his family at a solemn repast. Among such people as these nothing appears so loathsome as being buried and eaten up by worms.

3. Pagan priests were always wont to partake of the animals offered to the gods, and the animal called man was frequently sacrificed upon the altars. These priests were, therefore, cannibals by virtue of their vocation; and this may be termed the cannibalism of theology.

4. The cannibalism of discipline or education prevails in Ashanti. It is commonly believed by savages that people acquire the qualities of the animals on which they feed. In Ashanti, where much attention is given to the art of war, the raw recruits, especially those who have shown timidity in battle, are made to eat the hearts of those who have died fighting with bravery against them.

5. The cannibalism of revenge is not so common as is generally supposed. Savages usually eat men, not

because they hate them, but because they like them. However, it cannot be doubted that some do devour their enemies and drink their blood from a feeling of ferocity. With these people the end of a fray is always the beginning of a feast.

In 1870 I visited some cannibal tribes in the backwoods of Liberia. As among the Fans, only prisoners of war were eaten, and, therefore, the practice was rarely indulged in; moreover, these people never ate women, declaring that they were *tough*! This no doubt is one of many calumnies invented against the sex. More instances of cannibalism occur in the Delta of the Niger than in any other part of the continent; for in that region men are cheap, and human sacrifices frequent.

I left Itchongué in the morning, and was told that it would take me two days to reach the rapids, and that I should see no more towns. Whereupon I laid in a stock of plantains, torches, &c., which was just what they desired. I found, as I went on, the river banks more populated than below, which proved that the Fans were still streaming towards the west, and that the people of Itchongué were consummate liars. Whenever we passed a village, the natives rushed to the edge of the bank above our heads, and implored the Fans to stop and show the white man. But the white man bawled and gesticulated with such energy whenever they rested on their paddles, that they went resolutely on. At last a village called out that it would give me a fowl if I

would land and show myself. As fowls are not to be had every day, I closed with the offer at once, landed, and walked about for a quarter of an hour. Then Oshupu claimed the fowl, and an altercation arose. The natives appeared to be demanding something against which Oshupu and the Bakele expostulated, sometimes bursting into roars of laughter. I humbly requested an explanation. Oshupu said that it was only 'them dam niggers' nonsense.' I reiterated my request, and he told me, with a little diffidence, that the natives protested against my clothes. If I would remove the skin of the sea animal which I wore, keeping on, if I pleased, an apron of goat's skin, or a couple of plantain leaves, or anything in reason, they would pay me the fowl. But as it was I surreptitiously concealed my skin. Was I ashamed of it because I was not black?

I could not consent to this pose plastique exhibition, and, thinking it useless to argue about the matter, returned to my canoe, and we proceeded. The last village we passed was called Fotum. The stream now became so swift that if my canoe had not been well manned we could not have made way against it. Presently we came to a little island, where a tributary, called the Juba, joined the Ncomo. Upon this islet, which is called Ncomo-Juba, I discovered the traces of hippopotami. They are not found elsewhere in the Gaboon, and I was surprised to find them in a torrent only ten yards wide. They had doubtless been driven upwards by trap and gun. Close to their huge footmarks were the broken

shells of crocodiles' eggs, which showed the fallacy of an assertion, frequently made, that these animals will not live together. In the Fernand Vaz, however, the river horses frequent only the lower, and the crocodiles the upper river.

Now the scenery began to repay me for the monotonous hours of my little voyage. We glided into the bosom of the mountains, which rose beside us abrupt and vertical, as green walls. Through the mass of green leaves I could see here and there pale, slender branches, or some giant trunk looking down upon us from above. And out of the recesses of these precipice-forests came all manner of strange bird-cries—like the sawing of wood, the gurgling of water, the scream of a child.

Now the stream came round a bend of the river with such fury that we remained struggling for several minutes, sometimes gaining, sometimes losing a yard. At length, with the aid of long punting poles, we doubled the point, and there before us were the rocks, rearing their dark heads among the foam. The roaring of the waters, the excited cries of the boatmen, the sight of a higher mountain than I had yet beheld, gave me a glimmering of what it is an explorer feels when he achieves a triumph. I could now look round, and say, 'Here have white men striven to come, and none have succeeded but myself. For the first time the breath of a European mingles with this atmosphere; for the first time a leathern sole imprints its pressure on this soil; for the first time a being who has heard Grisi, and who faintly remembers the day when

he wore kid gloves, invades this region of the cannibal and the ape.'

As for my Lopez men, they had been so firmly imbued with a geographical theory of their own that rivers have no end, that these rapids, though not the end of the river, were sufficient to make them believe me a magician. They clapped one another's hands and breasts with boisterous laughter, and sang a song in honour of Reedee and the Ncomo.

Oshupu whispered to me his conviction that he was the greatest Mpongwe that had ever breathed, and reminded me that I had promised him a dollar in case we arrived at the rapids. I walked a little way up the river-bank. Above the rocks was a swift and savage stream which no canoe could stem. I sat down and looked at the water, which descended the rocks in a snowy cascade, flashing like a sunbeam through the sombre trees. Below me was the green and gliding river, with the bronze figures of my men upon its banks; and I listened to the music of their song as it mingled sweetly with the roaring of the Falls. Altogether it was a very happy day, and perhaps, if the truth be told, happy days in African travelling are rare and remarkable events.

THE ELEPHANT

In the East Indies elephants have been captured and tamed from time immemorial. There are hunters so courageous and skilful that they steal up to the wild elephant as he is feeding, or asleep, and tie his legs with a rope of buffalo hide to a tree: then building a shelter to protect him from the sun, and a wigwam for themselves, they remain upon the spot till they have reduced their captive by hunger to docility.[1] But the usual method of taking these animals is by driving them into an enclosure or corral. Certain persons who make it their profession tie them to trees, assisted by tame female elephants, which engage the attention of the prisoners, push them into the right position, and intercept all movements of the trunks towards the rope until the process is completed. At present elephants are tamed only for purposes of labour; but formerly they were chiefly employed in pageant and in war. Covered with trappings of gold, jugglers performing upon them, and pictures painted on their ears, they marched in the retinues of princes, to the wonder and amusement of the people. Clad in coats of Indian mail, with companies of archers in towers on their backs, they charged the troops

[1] Sir Emerson Tennent's 'Natural History of Ceylon.'

or embankments of the enemy; and sometimes scythes were fastened to their trunks, and they mowed down armies as they marched along.

These strange and prodigious creatures—moving mountains, with tails for hands—were first seen by Europeans[1] at the famous battle of Arbela, in the neighbourhood of ancient Nineveh, where Alexander fought his third and last great battle with the Persians. Elephants were again opposed to him in the Punjaub; and there he organised an elephant brigade, taking with him, no doubt, a number of Indians to serve as drivers and grooms. The successors of Alexander, who established their thrones on the banks of the Tigris, and afterwards at Antioch, procured elephants from India. The kings of Macedonia also employed these animals in war; and the Ptolemies obtained theirs from Abyssinia, where the famous sword-hunters were already in existence. These elephants were shipped at ports on the Red Sea, and drilled at Alexandria. They met the elephants of India on the Syrian plains, and Polybius has described the awful combat which then took place—how they twisted their trunks together and strove to gore one another in the flank. The Indian elephant is said to have been the larger animal and better soldier of the two; on this point the classical authorities are all agreed.[2]

[1] Grote.

[2] According to most modern authorities the African species is the larger; but Sir Samuel Baker says that he has killed monster 'rogues' in Ceylon, as large as any that he saw in Africa; and Colonel Grant, in his 'Walk across Africa,' p. 275, describes the elephants he saw as being 'none so large as the Indian breed, but short, stumpy, handy-looking animals.'

The employment of elephants in war was therefore universal in the Greek and Græco-Asiatic world, and Pyrrhus took a squadron into Italy when the Greek colonists of Naples called him over to protect them from the Romans. The Carthaginians,[1] who were then allied with the Romans against him, had thus an opportunity of observing this species of cavalry; and whether they adopted the idea from Pyrrhus, or whether they had already taken lessons from the Greeks of Alexandria, cannot be decided;[1] but this we know, that twelve years afterwards the Carthaginians had elephants of war, and the drivers were called Indians.[2] At that time elephants abounded in the forests of the Atlas.[3]

The Romans, as soon as they conquered the Carthaginians and the Greeks, suppressed their military elephants.[4] In Abyssinia they were employed by the ancestors of Theodore until the seventh century or so, for the year of Mahomet's birth was called *The Year of the Elephant*, the Negus of Abyssinia having invaded Mecca, with an elephant in his train. Just as the half-

[1] Heeren takes the former view; but Armandi, in his admirable monograph, 'Hist. militaire des Éléphants,' disputes it, and I think with justice. But no doubt the invasion of Pyrrhus gave an impulse to elephantine operations, and suggested the idea of transporting them by sea to Sicily.

[2] Polybius.

[3] This curious fact is supported by a multitude of authorities which will be found in Armandi. But what Pliny alone says on the subject is absolutely conclusive.

[4] The Romans themselves rarely used elephants in war. Gibbon has collected much information on this subject. But African elephants were frequently exhibited at Rome, dancing on the tight rope, and performing feats like those of the learned pig.

Arab, half-negro kings of Ethiopia kept up the taming of elephants long after they had been abandoned by the Ptolemies, who had introduced the art, so the princes of Barbary continued to use elephants in war for some time after the fall of Carthage. Jugurtha employed them against Sylla; Juba employed them against Cæsar. In the East Indies they never ceased to be employed till musketry came into fashion.

The question now remains to be considered, How were these elephants captured in Africa? We have already seen that the drivers in Carthage were Indians; and it may reasonably be inferred that the drivers among the Greeks were Indians also. It is not altogether impossible that a caste or guild of elephant-experts brought over from India to Africa the art of the corral. Respecting the manner in which the Alexandrine elephants were taken we have no evidence whatever: pits are now dug for elephants in Abyssinia; and they might have been taken in that manner, as elephants are sometimes taken in India at the present day; but the method is a bad one, the elephant being often injured by the fall.[1] The corral, perhaps, might have been used. Respecting the Atlas elephants which the Romans captured for the amphitheatre (employing, doubtless, the Carthaginian method), we learn from Pliny that they were driven into natural enclosures.[2]

[1] Emerson Tennent.

[2] Pliny says (Book viii. c. 10)—In Africa (i. e. Barbary) they are taken in pitfalls, or are killed only for the sake of their ivory; but 'it was formerly the practice to take them by driving the herds with horsemen into a

Now there is a passage in Leo Africanus which shows that the corral was employed in the regions of the Niger, not for the purpose of taking elephants alive, but merely of killing them; the words in Pory's translation are as follows:

'And although it be a mightie and fierce beast, yet there are great store of them caught by the Ethiopian hunters in manner following: These hunters being acquainted with the woodes and thickets where they keepe, use to make among the trees a rounde hedge of strong boughes and rafters, leaving a space open on the side thereof, and likewise a doore standing upon the plaine ground, which may be lift up with ropes, whereby they can easily stoppe the said open place or passage. The elephant, therefore, coming to take his rest under the shady boughes, entereth the hedge and inclosure, when the hunters, by drawing the said rope and fastening the door, having imprisoned him, descend downe from the trees, and kill him with their arrows, to the end they may get his teeth, and get sale of them. But if the elephant chanceth to break through the hedge, he murthereth as many men as he can find.'

This method of killing elephants by means of the corral is also practised by the Fans, and it was my good fortune to see a wild elephant in the enclosure or *nghâl*. Soon after my return to Baraka from the rapids[1] of the

[1] narrow defile, artificially made in such a way as to deceive them by its length, and when thus enclosed by means of steep banks and trenches, they were rendered tame by the effects of hunger. As a proof of which, they would quietly take a branch that was extended to them by one of the men.'

Ncomo, my host informed me that some elephants had been enclosed by a clan or family of Fans on Mpongwe land. I at once ordered my canoe, went up the main stream for fifteen miles, and then turned off into the by-ways of water, and arrived at a plantation village belonging to a chieftain of Gaboon, surrounded by farms, and inhabited by agricultural slaves.

The next morning I set out for the *nghâl*, which was only two miles off, taking with me some white beads, my price of admission to the menagerie of the bush.

The affair had thus been brought about. Some Fan hunters, having found that three elephants frequented this part of the forest, paid some money to the Mpongwe owners of the land, built their *nghâl*, and succeeded in enclosing the elephants therein.

I found three or four acres of ground enclosed by that kind of fence which is called a *ha-ha*. Round it at intervals were the huts of the hunters and their families: very primitive dwellings were these—roofs of dry leaves, supported by four poles, and bamboo settles within.

The ground enclosed was one of those comparatively open patches which are sometimes met with in the equatorial forests (probably the sites of ancient clearings), covered with a thick shrubby vegetation, and a large tree standing here and there. It formed a kind of dale; and no doubt there was a pond of water at the bottom.

The showmen pointed out a tree under which they said the elephants were sleeping. I wished to go inside

the fence, and to creep up close to them to have a good look. This the Fans would not hear of, though I offered them beads *ad libitum*. 'They feared my white face would frighten the elephants, and cause them to break away. 'If they do that,' whispered Oshupu, 'these people make you pay plenty for that palaver.'

While we were disputing, there was a great commotion, and a crowd of young men came running round. The elephants were awake. I ran round with the rest, mounted on the railings, and there, only a hundred yards off, I saw an elephant with enormous tusks. He was standing on three feet, swinging himself to and fro, and sometimes lazily raising his trunk to the tree above him, just as if he were in the middle of the forest. Now, the elephant is shy and retired in its habits, and exceedingly averse to the presence of man.[1] The more I looked the more I was surprised. Here was a great wild elephant, who paid no more attention to us than a cow in a field to people looking over the hedge. I had often heard of this, but I did not realise how extraordinary it was until I had seen it with my own eyes.

I asked how the elephants came there. The reply which I received was this. The elephants were in the neighbourhood. The *nghâl* was built. (Rude as it was it must have taken these savages much time.) A gap was left open, which they showed me, for they had not

[1] 'They evince the strongest love of retirement and a corresponding dislike to intrusion.'—E. Tennent. 'The elephant entertains an extraordinary horror of man, and a child can put a hundred of them to flight by passing at a quarter of a mile to windward.'—Gordon Cumming.

even closed it; it was just large enough for an elephant to pass through.

But why did the elephants stay? The fence was not strong enough to keep in a calf that wanted to get out. The Fans grinned, and looked mysterious. All the information I could obtain was this: 'The medicine-man made fetish for the elephants to come in. They came in. The medicine-man made *fetish* for them to remain; and they remained. When they were being killed fetish would be made that they might not be angry. In a fortnight's time the new moon would appear, and the elephants would then be killed. Before that time all the shrubs and high grass would be cut down;' (this, just inside the fence, had already been begun) 'the fence would be strengthened and interlaced with boughs; the elephants would be killed with guns, cross-bows, and spears.'

At this moment a man came round singing a melancholy tune, and dabbing the fence with a rag steeped in a dark brown liquid. The chief of the hunters informed me that this was the fetish; that it was held every day when the sun was in that quarter of the sky, and that it would be rendered null and void by the presence of a white man. He would be happy to see me at the new moon.

I took this hint, which was accompanied by much broad laughter; but my trip to Camma prevented me from accepting his invitation. The killing of the elephants would have been a very exciting scene; but not

in any way remarkable. The two great mysteries were these: first, how the elephants came into the enclosure; secondly, and chiefly, how they were kept, so to speak, in the middle of a village, for such a length of time.

This puzzled me for several years, but I recently read again the full and interesting account of the corral which is given by Sir Emerson Tennent in his 'Natural History of Ceylon.' When I laid down the book I felt as if a weight had been taken from my mind. I could now understand the conduct of the elephant, which at first seemed to me to be contrary to nature. This animal has whims and fancies of his own; and one of these is a curious reluctance to break through a fence. In Ceylon the corral is made beforehand, as in the Gaboon. The wild elephants are surrounded, and are gradually driven towards the enclosure; they enter through the gates; in a few moments the corral is surrounded, and the gates are closed. The elephants dash towards the fence: fire-brands in the night or white willow wands in the day-time are thrust in their faces, and they then wheel round. Charge follows charge, and always with the same result. The Ceylon fence is stronger than that of the Fans, yet could not resist for a moment the rush of an infuriated elephant. But the captives recoil with a kind of superstition from the fence, and the torches, and the outstretched wands; and at last they gather together in the centre of the corral, and stand still as if in despair.

Then the tame elephants and the men with ropes are introduced. But with this part of the business we are

not concerned. Let us suppose instead, that the Ceylon elephants are left alone. There can be no doubt that if they found food and water in abundance they would remain quietly in the same place, charging less and less frequently at the fence, and at last becoming reconciled to their imprisonment within the rules.

Such, I have no doubt, was the history of the *nghâl*. First it was built; then the elephants were driven towards it with the noise of tom-toms, and the waving of torches; then the fence was surrounded, and the elephants frightened back into the secluded space in the centre of the *nghâl*.

It is also possible that the brown liquid which was sprinkled on the fence might have had some odour which the elephants disliked; and it was suggested to me by a missionary who had also seen elephants in a *nghâl*, that they were fed on poisoned plantains, to make them weak and stupid when the day of slaughter comes. That is probable enough, and would explain why the elephants are kept so long in the enclosure; a practice attended with much trouble and also some risk of their breaking away. A slave, who came from the kingdom of Matiamvo, a country south-west of Tanganyika Lake, told me, when I was in Angola, that the hunters of his country drugged the wild elephants by placing poisoned food in their haunts before they attacked them. But he had never heard of elephant-enclosures, and the corral appears to be extinct in the regions visited by Leo Africanus

It may be that the *nghâl* of the Fans is the old Carthaginian enclosure, derived through the country of the Niger; but I am inclined to think it an original invention of the negroes. 'By attacking elephants in the ordinary way they could only kill one of a family or herd, while by this system of enclosing they are able to kill them all.'[1]

[1] It has often been alleged, as a proof of the negro's mental inferiority, that he has never learnt to tame the elephant. But tamed elephants have existed in the Soudan. Duncan says, he saw two in the country behind Dahomey. Riley mentions one on hearsay; so do Edrisi and other Arabian writers. The best instance is to be found in Mohammed-el-Tounsy's 'Voyage au Wadai.' He relates that the Sultan of Darfur gave a young elephant to a tributary Arab tribe to rear; the elephant soon began to eat them out of house and home, and they sent their sheik to beg that it might be taken back. The sheik was so confused at the sight of the Sultan, that he asked for another elephant, and it was given him. The reason that elephants have never been regularly used by the people of Soudan is this: that elephants are very expensive luxuries, and that the negroes are always poor on account of their isolation from the great centres of commerce. John Ragenji told me he had thought of taming a young elephant to send to England, and said it could easily be done. There is no difficulty whatever in taming an elephant; the difficulty is to feed him.

THE KING OF THE REMBO

MY first object in visiting the Gorilla Country had been to investigate the statements of M. du Chaillu. But I found that in the Gaboon itself little was known about him, and that the chief scene of his supposed exploits was the region of the Fernand Vaz, or Camma Country, especially a town called Ngumbi. There were no white men in the Fernand Vaz, Captain Lawlin, an American, who had colonised it, having died six months before. I wished, therefore, to go on to that river. But there was no regular communication between it and the Gaboon. To go by land was almost impossible, on account of intervening swamps, and at that time of the year the wind blows steadily from the south-west, and one cannot sail in a canoe against the wind.

But it happened that a Captain Johnson had been sent out to take charge of the factory vacated by the death of Captain Lawlin. He was in Gaboon, and about to sail to Camma in a fine surf-boat, sloop-rigged. He was glad of a companion, I of a passage, and so we agreed to go together. On May 28 we set sail, and stole slowly from the river into the broad and swelling sea.

During five days we enjoyed the romantic freedom

of ocean life, which poets have so often sung, and which consists in being confined to a small conveyance at the mercy of the wind and current. However, we managed to enjoy ourselves tolerably well. We breakfasted at sunrise off a piece of salt beef, soaked and boiled overnight, with a dish of plantains, a pot of coffee, Durham mustard, chutney, and pickled onions. After our meals—the events of the day—we dipped our hands in the great finger basin over the boat's side, and dried them in the air, with flourishes like the Normans in 'Ivanhoe.'

I never drank spirits in these excursions. Johnson, on the contrary, lived upon gin. He had a large green case, on which he leaned his elbow by day and his head by night. He had two china mugs, which he filled at short intervals, one with Hollands, the other with water, emptying the gin mug first, the water mug afterwards. He had a method in his madness—but madness it was; and he died soon after his return.

In the prow was a tub half-filled with sand, wherein blazed a fire, which, like that of the vestals, was never suffered to go out. Round this squatted or lay four Krumen, two Camma men, the boat's cook, and Oshupu.

Sometimes when there was no wind, we ran in and anchored near the shore. Then the anchor-watch slept like a dormouse, the captain like a hare. At the first puff of wind this wonderful man would spring into full life, and cry, 'Now then, hurry up, hurry up there!

Now, Captain Jack, wake your boys there—give them hell.' And Captain Jack, the head Kruman, having waked up his boys, and given them hell in the language of the Grebboes, the anchor would be hauled up with a hoarse rattle, we would dash along through the morning dusk, the spray falling over us, the ruddy glare of the tub-fire on the sail, the water bubbling music beneath us, while Johnson, in a nautical ecstacy, would cry, 'Go it Sal, and *I'll* hold your bonnet!'

It was the first week of the dry season, and we did not have a single shower. Nor did we suffer from the sun: for though no rain falls at this time of year, the sky is always covered with clouds. The natives had begun to burn the little grass prairies, which crowned the hilly shore between Gaboon and Cape Lopez. At night these resembled burning mountains, and reminded me of the narrative of Hanno.

We did not double Cape Lopez, but entered the delta of the Ogowai or Nazareth River, which communicates with the Fernand Vaz. After ten miles we left the mangroves behind us, and passed through a mass of marshy undergrowth, from which rose graceful palms, their hard leaves rustling like the pattering of rain. The country seemed to be one vast swamp, in which locomotion could only be achieved on stilts. The birds were chiefly of the aquatic kind, and we often saw perched on a lightning-blasted tree a large black-and-white fishing eagle. It was dull in its attitude, and heavy in its flight, and Johnson looked upon it with

contempt. 'Ah,' said he, 'they can't raise such eagles here as we do in the States.'

In the daytime the voyage was more pleasant than by the weary process of 'beating' out at sea. There was always something to look at, and our progress was steady and sure. But with the night came misery upon our heads. Then the mosquitoes swarmed around us. Then from the swamps rose the grey deadly vapour, which, breathing poison, enveloped us like a shroud. In the morning we would wake and look curiously at each other's pale faces, but the salt beef was an excellent restorative, and we soon recovered from the effects of sleep.

On the afternoon of the seventh day we emerged into a beautiful river, its banks lined with villages and meadows of green grass. Down to the beach poured men and women when our sail was seen, and cried '*Trade come! Lawli's son! Lawli's son!*' There had been no business doing in the river for several months, so the waist-cloths of these people were ragged, and they had no tobacco. They took it for granted that Johnson was Captain Lawlin's son; for having seen but few white men, they suppose that we are all of us related to one another.

We had entered the river ten miles from the mouth, and ten miles more brought us to the factory, which was in excellent repair and under the charge of Retimbo, a native headman or king. He came to meet us, and with his battered beaver hat, a spotted kerchief round

his neck, and a short stick in his hand, looked just like the comic Irishman of music-halls. After dinner we went to Captain Lawlin's grave.

This man deserves a public epitaph. He was an American, and had spent much of his life in the Fernand Vaz. His factory had formerly been on the south side of the river: he had called it New York. In '57 he received this island, which he named Brooklyn, as a gift from the natives; it was then surrounded by a belt of trees, enclosing a prairie in the centre; his first step was to cut down and uproot the trees on the south side. He built a large factory of bamboos, floored it with planks sawn from native timber, and built a wharf or pier adjoining. The bamboo huts of his Krumen and his Camma labourers made quite a little hamlet, which he built like a college—a quadrangle of sand in the midst. In this sand-square was a large bell, upon which were chimed the sea-bells half hourly, while a Kruman, always on guard with a musket, chaunted 'All's Well.'

Behind his village was the prairie, in which a family of antelopes might be seen feeding; he allowed no one to molest them. River-horses sported round the island, raising their huge brown heads and spouting forth jets of foam. And the social grosbeak had formed their republic like a miniature rookery in the trees round the house.

He was so much beloved and honoured by the natives that they made him a Makaga, or chief, a

member of the Camma confederation. He obtained the passing of a most important law, which was the means of saving me from a serious dilemma, as will presently be seen.

He was buried in the prairie at his own request. A Spanish carpenter made a wooden tomb, painted white to resemble stone, and on it this was inscribed, I know not by whom—

SACRED TO THE MEMORY

OF

CAPT. RICHARD E. LAWLIN, OF N. Y.

DIED ON THE 6TH OF DECEMBER, 1861.

'One soweth and another reapeth.'

JOHN iv. 37.

☞ Reapers behold the sower ! !

We sat down and looked at the tomb a little while : we were then joined by a man named Mafuk.

The Camma language differs little from that of the 'Gaboon ; but I wished to engage a counsellor and guide, and this was the man recommended by Retimbo.

He was very short, with a yellower face and more of a beard than is usually found among these people. Like most small men he was rather self-sufficient, inquired after my family, and called me his dear friend.

I put a stop to this familiarity, and spoke about his wages. I agreed to give him four dollars a month, and ordered a canoe and four men. Next morning at daylight we were off.

The preparations which I made were these: my canoe was furnished with mast and sail, spare paddles, and poles for punting in the shallows; a cask of water for my men—the lower river being salt—and a small stone jar for myself. My bed was spread in the stern, so that I could lie down when I wished, and my rug was folded as a seat in the bow of the boat, where I sat, gun in hand, looking out for a specimen or something for the dinner.

My men's provisions were plantains at a shilling the bunch, or at least its equivalent in currency—a fathom of cloth, or two heads of tobacco, or ten strings of beads, or one brass rod, or a red cap, such as is worn by bargees. They had also long rolls of cassada cooked in a peculiar way, and possessing a strong acrid taste, which fortunately for mankind is not to be found in any other kind of food.

This was all I was obliged to find; but when harder work than usual was required, I used to buy them dried fish, and sometimes gave them tobacco as well.

One tin box, water-proof, and not too heavy, contained my ammunition, a bottle of chlorodyne, another of quinine, one spare shirt, two pairs of socks, a measuring tape, twine, a pair of scissors, a hunting knife, some kind of book which required study, a pound of tea, a few ditto of sugar, two or three tins of prepared cocoa, and a bottle of oil to protect my gun-locks from rust, which in this country accumulates in a manner surpassing all belief.

Another tin box, similar in size and make, contained my cash, that is to say, my cloth, tobacco, and beads. The cloth is measured into fathoms by the steward, who stretches both arms out straight from the shoulder, which comes to six feet or thereabouts. If the purchaser has longer arms than the steward, he calls it short measure; if his arms are shorter, he laughs in his sleeve, or would if he had one. My stewards, however, had never afforded them much gratification that way. Mongilomba had short dumpy arms, and Oshupu a method of 'palming,' which the natives often discovered, and which I had strictly forbidden him to practise; but though he gained nothing thereby, do it he would, from a pure love for deceit: the chivalry of fraud.

The men take their wages in cloth; of all imports it has the most important sale, for Manchester dresses Africa. It is considered more genteel to wear a dirty rag of English cotton, such as we use for a duster, than the grass-kilts of the country, which are often beautifully made.

As soon as we were started, the Camma men played off all kinds of antics, singing furiously and capering about. They slapped the water with the blade of the paddle, and holding it over them point downwards let a single drop of water fall into their mouths. After which they seemed better, and paddled steadily till the afternoon.

We were passing a large village when Mafuk told

me that the king of the Rembo, or upper Fernand Vaz, was staying there, and as we were going to his town, it would not be etiquette to pass him by.

Accordingly I went ashore, and was introduced to King Quenqueza, a fine old man, with features differing much from the ordinary negro type, as is usually the case among men of intelligence and rank. A few compliments having passed between us, I told him that I was going to Ngumbi; and that if I was satisfied he would be my friend, I would set up a factory there. Quenqueza warmly approved of this scheme, and said that he himself would accompany me there on the morrow or the day after. Now I never yielded to negro procrastination, or delayed a single unnecessary moment, and it was only by adhering to this rule that in five months of the Gorilla Country I covered so much ground. I therefore said that I could not wait. The king declared that he could not go that evening, and that I should not go, save in his company. I then threatened to return to the factory, and to go up the Ogowai the next day. I ordered my men into the canoe, and, seating myself in the stern, cried '*Kabbi!*' (paddle) in a resolute voice. Quenqueza, seeing that I was in earnest, begged me to listen to him. I could not leave the lower river without the permission of the King of Camma, who lived close by. A swift messenger would be sent to him at once. The king would come. I would give him a glass of rum, and he would give me permission to enter the Rembo. I

would give him (Quenqueza) also a glass of rum, and he would take me to his town. I acquiesced in these conditions, bought a fowl, had it cooked, and dined there surrounded by spectators. I had just finished my repast when the King of Camma arrived with his retinue. I shook hands, and offered him the glass of

rum. He seemed to want it, but looked uneasily around him. Somebody handed him my Turkish towel: he hid his face and the glass of rum behind it: and when he removed it, his eyes were slightly bloodshot, and the rum was gone. I inquired what this might mean, and they told me it was forbidden

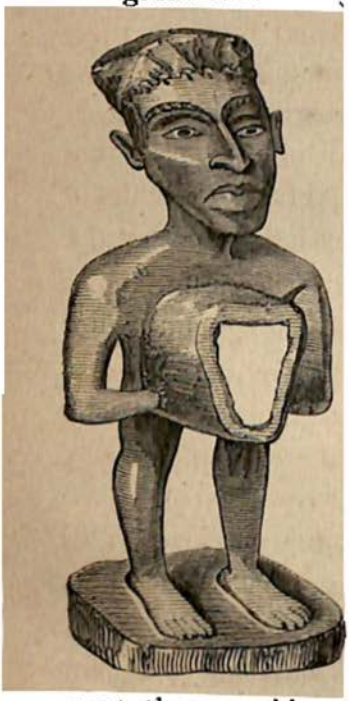
to see the king drink.[1] I then asked permission to go on, which was given in a husky voice.

Quenqueza came into my canoe, and sat beside me on a mat spread out in the stern. Next day the river narrowed, and its fringe of swamp disappeared; the banks became high, of red or yellow clay, with the roots of trees protruding through them like enormous fossil bones. The villages were perched above us. On the third day the river had become as narrow as the Ncomo at Fotum. The sun was sinking behind the trees, and the glare of daylight softening into dusk when we saw a light twinkling in the distance. This was Ngumbi, the capital of the Rembo, and residence of the King Quenqueza.

When the men saw this light they uttered a murmur of joy, and bent low over their swift paddles. Then Quenqueza rang an iron bell, which he carried always at his waist, and, raising his hands, he cried, 'Spirit of my father! protect this white man who comes to visit us. Preserve him from sickness while he stays. Make his heart good towards us when he goes away.'

[1] In many parts of Africa the king is a puppet in the hands of the priests, and is never seen by the people, who are taught to believe that he *neither* eats, drinks, sleeps, nor dies. In other parts the king is visible, but it is not permitted to see him eat, drink, &c., and it would no doubt be high treason to assert that he required food like other men. 'Where does the King sleep?' asked a white man of a Dahomey native. 'Where does God?' was the reply. The case in point is an excellent instance of what are technically called Survivals, that is to say, of customs outliving *their* purpose and becoming irrational observances. *Invisible* kings exist or have existed in Benin, Wadai, Abyssinia, and even it is said, in the days of darkness, in Yemen

He then addressed some remarks to a little idol, which he always carried with him, and which he nursed with great care. It had a piece of glass in the middle of its abdomen; and Quenqueza believed that when that glass broke he would die.



We landed as usual in a crowd, and I went with the king to the palaver-house. Then Quenqueza, in the presence of all the people, solemnly bade me welcome. I briefly returned thanks in my character as trader, which I had been compelled to assume, for these people of the Fernand Vaz had never seen white men who were not traders, such as Lawlin, Du Chaillu, &c. Had I said that I was travelling simply for amusement they would not have believed it, and would have suspected me of some sinister design.

Now the interests of Mafuk and the interests of the king were not the same. Quenqueza wished me to build my factory at Ngumbi; Mafuk, who belonged to the lower river, would rather have had it established there. Accordingly Quenqueza was distrustful of Mafuk, and, opening his mouth, he spake a parable as follows:—

'There was a man named Njabi, who had four sons, Eye, Nose, Mouth, and Skin. And he had one daughter

whose name was Heart, who was never at rest, and she made him visit countries far away. Then he went to see his brother Quaqua. There was one man, Seringila, a great liar and tale-bearer, and he tried to make these two brothers enemies; but they remained friends and burnt this liar and tale-bearer Seringila. Then were their towns joined together; the town of Njabi and the town of Quaqua became one; but Njabi was the chief.'

The king explained that I was Njabi, and that he was Quaqua, and that if any man made mischief between us he would burn him. Here he gave a stern look at Mafuk, who trembled exceedingly. Quenqueza was pleased when he saw me writing this in my pocket-book, and when I had finished, asked me to put down, *The King of the Rembo told me this story.*

One of the king's wives now brought a calabash to wash my feet, according to a custom ancient and hospitable. My boots and stockings sadly puzzled the royal dame; and these Oshupu took off with many sneers against her ignorance.

Sandals being here unknown, the sole of the foot is horny and hard, and quite incapable of titillation. The lady at first took hold of mine in fear, as if afraid it would crumble to pieces between her hands. Then finding it felt like other feet, she rubbed the sole in the ordinary manner. Upon which I laughed hysterically, and kicked the calabash into her face.

THE GORILLA

THE naturalists of the last century were acquainted with two species of anthropoid or man-like apes, the chimpanzee of Western Africa, and the ourang-outang of the Indian Archipelago. In both countries these animals are regarded by the natives as members of the human family,[1] and even the great Linnæus, misled by travellers' tales, appears at one time to have supposed that they were men.[2] Buffon, who possessed a young chimpanzee, dispelled the popular illusions on this subject, much to the distaste of Lord Monboddo, who maintained that the apes differed only from ourselves in being less accomplished in learning and the arts.[3]

[1] In Liberia, the Chimpanzees are supposed to be a tribe so lazy and filthy in their habits, that they gradually degenerated into their present condition. When the natives go to war they make it unlawful to kill a Chimpanzee, hoping by this act of virtue to obtain good luck.

[2] He confused the Chimpanzee and the Albino. See his letter to Ellis in Sir J. E. Smith's 'Correspondence of Linnæus,' vol. i. p. 89, and Buffon on the Chimpanzee.

[3] In a letter to Linnæus (vol. i. *loc. cit.* p. 555), he says '. . . whereas in the history of animals there is nothing more important to us than what is related of such as most nearly approach our own genus, differing from us only in being less accomplished in the arts and learning, I speak of the wild man of the woods, vulgarly called the *ouran outang*, yet, on this subject, Buffon is eminently culpable. . . . He will not believe that such a creature, though, as he allows, endowed with a human shape, can either speak or think.'

Travellers had often spoken of an ape larger than the chimpanzee existing in the forests of Gaboon,[1] and in 1846 it was discovered by the American missionaries. Dr. Savage, who belonged to the mission at Cape Palmas in Liberia, was already acquainted with the apes, and had written, in conjunction with Professor Jeffries Wyman of Harvard, an excellent paper on the habits and characters of the chimpanzee.[2] It happened that he paid a visit to Gaboon, and was there shown by the Rev. Leighton Wilson[3] an ape's skull, which he at once perceived, by its size and peculiar conformation, to be that of a new species. This greater ape the natives called *njina*, while the chimpanzee they called *nshiego*.[4] Dr. Savage compiled an account of the njina's habits from the hunters of Gaboon, and also obtained a skeleton which he and Wyman described together,[5] as they had previously described the chimpanzee.

But although the gorilla (as Savage and Wyman named their new species) created a sensation among comparative anatomists, and for some time monopolised the attention of Professor Owen and Geoffroy St. Hilaire, it was still unknown to people in general, and *ourang-outang* was still a favourite term of abuse. But the year

[1] Battel in Purchas. Monboddo, 'Origin and Progress of Language,' i. p. 281. Dr. Traill in 'Wernerian Transactions.' 'Mission to Ashanti,' Bowditch.

[2] 'Boston Journal of Natural History,' vol. iv.

[3] The gorilla is mentioned in Wilson's 'Western Africa.'

[4] Sometimes written enceego, which was corrupted into enjocko. Buffon took off the *en*, and hence the word jocko came into use.

[5] 'Boston Journal of Natural History,' vol. v.

1861 proved fatal to the fame of the Indian ape, for then M. du Chaillu came over from the States with a number of stuffed gorillas, which were exhibited in the rooms of the Geographical Society, and afterwards in the windows of the 'Field' Office. They were stared at through gold eye-glasses by languid ladies of fashion gathered by Sir Roderick Murchison at dinners and conversaziones, and invited to view the wonder of the day, while crowds blocked up the side-walk in the Strand.

And then appeared the celebrated book, composed in the Defoe style, by a New York journalist, from M. du Chaillu's original MS. The word *gorilla* was on everybody's lips, and caricatures everywhere appeared. Mudie's was besieged for copies, and all London read with thrilling interest the adventures of the new Jules Gérard and his description of the monstrous and ferocious ape, which advanced to the attack *en se poitrinant*, thumping its breast like a tom-tom, roaring so loudly that it could be heard three miles, and squaring up in the P. R. style, one well-planted blow being sufficient to tear out the poor negro's entrails, break his breast-bone, or crush his scull.

The geographers swallowed Du Chaillu whole, and he safely passed through the gauntlet of reviewers. Professor Owen also accepted his account of the habits of the gorilla, for he himself had announced to a London audience, two years before,[1] that the gorilla often attacked the elephant, hitting him over the trunk with a stick,

[1] Proceedings of the Royal Institution, 1859.

was more than a match for the lion (which does not exist in gorilla-land at all), and furthermore indulged in the unseemly habit of sitting in the trees, lowering its hind foot to catch the passing negro by the neck, drawing him up to the higher branches, choking him to death, and then letting him fall down again. It may therefore be easily supposed that he saw no reason to doubt the comparatively commonplace statements of Du Chaillu. But most of the leading zoologists disbelieved him from the first, and Dr. Gray attacked him in the 'Athenæum.'

Here, at this town of Ngumbi, or Goumbi, I was on the arena of M. Du Chaillu's astonishing achievements; and they did astonish his native hunters and companions. Soon after my arrival I announced my intention of going out after gorillas, upon which there was an outcry of wonder and remonstrance. Whoever heard of white men shooting gorillas? Why could I not do like Mr. Paulo? Their hunters would go out and kill me gorillas, and I could buy them with cloth and tobacco, and take off their skins. A roar of laughter followed my announcement that M. Du Chaillu had shot gorillas himself. He had shot birds and small monkeys, they said, but that was all.

However this may be, one thing at least is certain, that M. Du Chaillu's account of the apes is incorrect, and his book should be placed entirely aside by those who are studying the *Simiæ* of Africa. The memoir of Dr. Savage must still be considered the classical

authority on the ape which he discovered. But I do not wish the reader to suppose that M. Du Chaillu is merely a composer of spurious adventures. His early trips to the interior, though without geographical importance, were highly creditable to him, for at that time he was only a trader: from the first he was full of courage and enthusiasm: and after he had made his reputation, he took lessons in practical astronomy, returned to the Fernand Vaz, and made a gallant though ineffectual attempt to penetrate into the heart of Africa.

The gorillas and chimpanzees are exceedingly wary in their habits, and keen of hearing and smell; even the native hunters find it difficult to kill them. Yet these men go naked, and often on all fours, and their black bodies seen through the foliage resemble those of the wild animals whose movements they imitate. But the white sportsman can only hope to get a shot by accident, for as he blunders along through the bush, creepers entangle his feet, branches catch in his clothes, and twigs snap under his feet. The hunters of Ngumbi told me that I should never be able to see a gorilla as long as I persisted in wearing boots, which were very ornamental in the town, but altogether out of place in the forest. I came to the conclusion that to shoot a gorilla (or chimpanzee) a twelvemonth at least would be required, and was not disposed to give up that amount of time. Of course it might so happen that another sportsman would see a gorilla he very first time he went into the forest

but this at least may safely be affirmed, that no European will ever be able to study the habits of the African manlike apes in their wild state. Full information on this point can be obtained from native hunters alone. Dr. Savage examined the Mpongwe hunters of Gaboon, and I also examined the Fan hunters of the Ncomo, the hunters of the Muni, and the hunters of the Fernand Vaz, which latter region may be considered the metropolis of the gorilla. The evidence which I collected differs from that of Savage on one point alone. It seems to me that his informants, as is natural enough, had exaggerated the ferocity of the gorilla. For instance, he says, '*The natives stand greatly in fear of it, and never attempt its capture except in self-defence.*' But gorilla skins are now a regular article of trade, and the supply has always equalled the demand. Again he says, '*They are exceedingly ferocious, and always offensive in their habits, never running from men as does the chimpanzee.*' Now such statements as these were frequently made to me, but when I cross-examined the hunters, the true slayers of gorillas, I found that the ape was not so formidable as it was reported. We all know that the leopard is less to be dreaded than the tiger, or even the lion.[1] Now when I asked the hunters which they feared most, the gorilla or the leopard? they one and all answered, the leopard! They have also a

[1] Barrow and Livingstone have both aspersed the character of the lion. It looks like a mastiff, and cannot roar any better than an ostrich. At least, it is certain that the tiger is far its superior in ferocity and strength.

proverb, 'Leave the njina alone and njina will leave you alone.' But the best proof I have that the gorilla runs away from man is derived from personal experience. I was on the tracks of a male gorilla in the neighbourhood of Ngumbi, and we approached near enough to hear him breaking the branches as he moved along about thirty yards ahead. I crept up towards him as softly as I could, but he heard me, and rushed away.

Dr. Savage says, of the chimpanzee, that '*the canines are early developed and evidently designed to act the important part of weapons of defence. When in contact with man, almost the first effort of the animal is to bite.*' He also says, that he had seen one man who had been severely bitten in the feet by a chimpanzee. Now, although the gorilla has strength enough in its enormous arms to tear a man asunder, it uses them merely in arboreal gymnastics, and, like the chimpanzee, bites when it attacks. In neither the Muni, Gaboon, nor Fernand Vaz has any one been killed by a gorilla within the memory of man. But at Ngumbi, the chief hunter of the town, who was named Etia, had been wounded by one of these apes. His left hand was crippled, and the dents of two teeth were plainly visible upon his wrist. He told me that the gorilla when shot at or wounded always charged, and that the hunter usually escaped. But on this occasion, the gorilla seized him by the hand, carried it to his mouth 'like a plantain,' gave it a bite, then dropped it and ran away. The charge was made on all fours.

I once saw a large male gorilla just after it had been killed. The face had an expression of horrible ferocity, which is partially lost when the animal is stuffed. The arms were full and symmetrically formed, human in appearance, but gigantic, and the whole trunk as far as the waist was that of an enormous man. And then came a pair of short, withered, shrunken, stunted legs, like those of an old woman. A mere glance at the body was sufficient to show that the gorilla cannot *walk*. But when it wishes to see something more distinctly, as, for instance, the hunter who approaches, it rises to the erect position, holding on however by a branch, by way of support. I have noticed in monkeys, that whenever they stand up (which several species can do with ease), it is to look at some object, and thus it is Curiosity which first induces quadrupeds to stand on their hind legs.

There is certainly a difference in character between the gorilla and the chimpanzee. The gorilla frequents the darkest, densest regions of the forest; the chimpanzee the more open parts and the neighbourhood of prairies. The chimpanzee is less fierce and more intelligent than the larger ape. The natives, as Savage has recorded, compare the gorilla to a bushman, and the chimpanzee to a coastman. 'If you throw a spear at the *ushiego*,' said Etia, 'it will catch it and throw it back at you, but the *njina* does not know how to do that.'

I am also inclined to think that the chimpanzee frequents the trees more than the gorilla, which lives entirely upon the ground, merely ascending the trees to

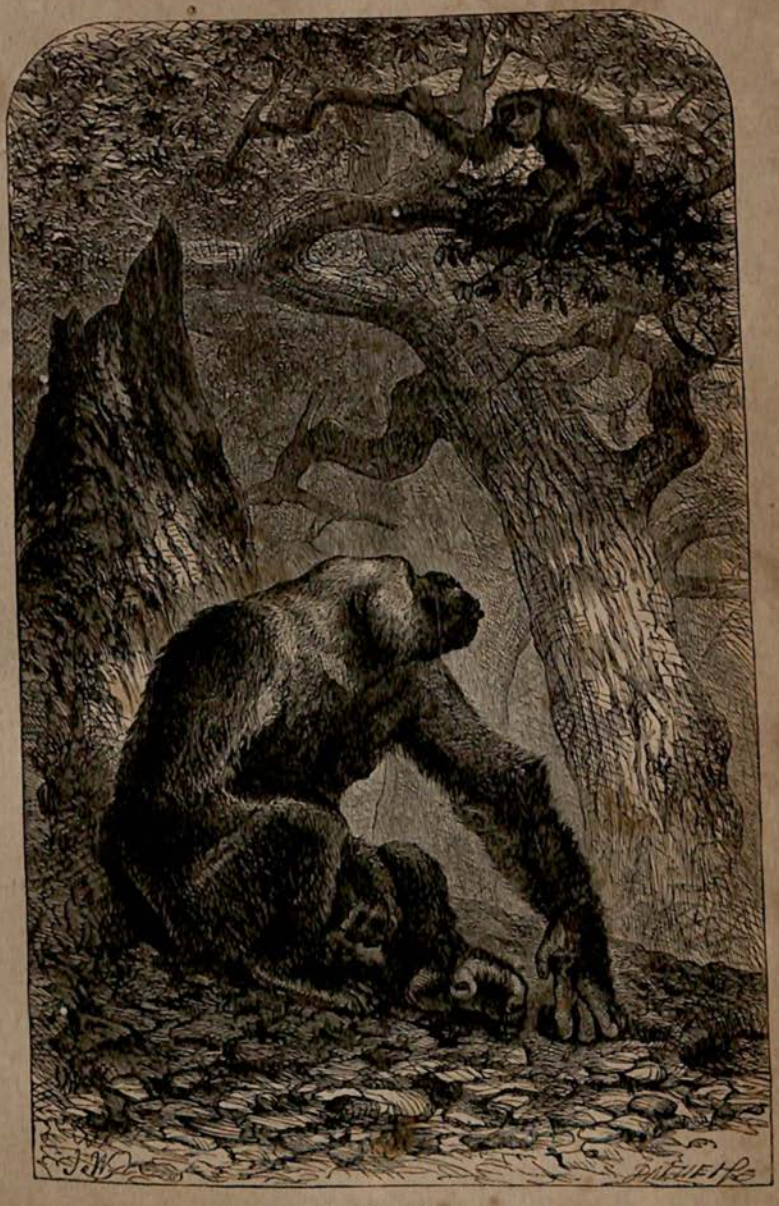
gather fruit, or sometimes to sleep in the branches, or possibly upon its nest.

'*These dwellings*,' says Dr. Savage, '*if they may so be called, are similar to those of the chimpanzee, consisting simply of a few sticks and leafy branches, supported by the crotches and limbs of trees; they afford no shelter, and are occupied only at night. . . . The natives ridicule this habit of the Engeena. They call him a fool to make a house without a roof in a country where they have so much rain.*' [1]

The nests are here correctly described. I have seen those of the chimpanzee and those of the gorilla, the latter being the larger of the two. But, as regards their use, I am not so clear. The ourang-outang makes a sleep-nest for itself every night.[2] Dr. Savage appears to have been informed that these nests of the African apes were made for a similar purpose. But I was told that they were made as birds' nests are made—for the confinement of the female. No doubt they are often used as sleeping-places, as birds roost in old nests; but if they were always used for that purpose, would not the

[1] 'The trees . . . are so closely planted that I have heard gorillas, here called "sokos," growling about fifty yards off without getting a glimpse of them. His nest is a poor contrivance; it exhibits no more architectural skill than the nest of our cushat dove. Here the "soko" sits in pelting rain with his hands over his head. The natives give him a good character, and from what I have seen he deserves it: but they call his nest his house, and laugh at him for being such a fool as to build a house and not go beneath it for shelter.'—Livingstone to Lord Stanley, from the Manyema Country, November 15, 1870.

[2] Wallace's 'Indian Archipelago.' This book is the best authority on the habits of the ourang-outang.



Gorillas and Nest.

gorilla hunters merely lie in wait near the nest and shoot the ape as he went to bed? But this I know they are not in the habit of doing, and I fully believe in Waterton's maxim, that the 'monkeys have no home.'

The chimpanzee ranges along the whole coast from Senegambia on the north to Angola on the south, but the gorilla is found only to a little distance on each side of the Equator, so far as the coast-regions are concerned. But Schweinfurth alludes to its existence in the country north of the Albert Nyanza; and Livingstone has shown that they are found in the country west of Tanganyika. Now, as the gorilla frequents only the primæval forest, we may hence infer that a vast belt of virgin forest extends across the African plateau from the Gaboon to the Albert Lake; and certainly the tribes which Schweinfurth and Livingstone describe in the most distant countries which they reached, closely resemble the bush-tribes of Gaboon.

DETAINED

HAVING given up all hopes of bagging a gorilla within a reasonable time, and having satisfied my curiosity respecting M. du Chaillu's statements, I determined to visit some other region of the coast. I accordingly informed Quenqueza that I intended to depart. He begged me to wait till the next day, and he would then accompany me in person to Brooklyn. Much as I might have felt flattered by this offer, I at first declined it; for I wished to reach the Gaboon in time to sail to Fernando Po by the vessel which went to meet the monthly mail, and negro princes do not love rapid travelling. However, the old man was so polite, so humble even, that I graciously yielded, and agreed to wait another day.

The next morning I had my boat loaded, and announced to the king that I was ready. He replied that he must go with me because he was my dear friend. I requested him to come then at once. He said that he would eat his breakfast, and then he would go. (All this while he had fully made up his mind that I should not leave the town for a considerable time.) After he had finished breakfast I reminded him that my canoe was waiting. He said I must please speak to his

cousin before I went. I asked him where his cousin was. He replied in the plantation. I said in broad English that I would see his cousin farther before I waited for him. This was translated by Mafuk into polite Mpongwe. Then the king promised to come down to the canoe as soon as he had arranged some domestic matters with his steward. I went down before him and waited half an hour in a boiling fidget. The king did not come; this increased my exasperation, and I cried *Kabbi!* in a savage voice. Mafuk and Oshupu began to remonstrate, but I would not listen to them. The men grinned, and bent forward on their paddles; we shot out to the middle of the stream; a cluster of natives on the bank looking on at us with open mouths. When the first turning hid Ngumbi from sight I felt like a prisoner who had escaped. A black-and-white eagle was perched upon a withered branch, and surveyed the stream below, digesting the heads of fishes (his favourite *bonne bouche*), or devising a second course to his repast. I put my rifle to my shoulder and knocked away the branch from under him.

On we went through the water, shadowed by the high trees, while the other side shone like silver in the sun. I lay at full length on the mat, with my pith helmet over my eyes, collarless, coatless, comfortable, cosy, building castles in the air. Suddenly my men stopped paddling, and looked at one another with anxious eyes. Lazily raising myself upon my elbows, I looked back, and could see, at a great distance, a

black spot and something rising and falling like a streak of light. The men put their hands to their ears: I listened and could hear now and then a faint note borne towards us on the wind.

'What's that, Mafuk?'

'King, sir.'

'Oh, he's coming, is he?' said I, laughing. 'Well, he can easily catch us now he is so near. *Kabbi!*'

My stewards gave an uneasy smile and did not answer. The canoemen dipped their paddles into the water, and that was all. Every man was listening with bent head, as if trying to detect the words or the tune. I looked round again. I could now see that it was a large canoe, manned by about twenty hands, with a kind of thatched house in its stern. The song still continued, and could now be plainly heard. My men flung their paddles down, and began to talk to one another in an excited manner.

'What is the matter now?' said I, pettishly.

Mafuk wiped his forehead.

'*It is the war song.*'

On came the canoe, black with men, the paddles tossing the white water in the air. On it came, shot swiftly past us, arched round, and lay up to us close alongside. Then rose a storm of angry voices, Quenqueza's raised above the rest. They were more than double our numbers, but were not armed, and I determined that they should not take us back. I had just begun to bawl and gesticulate as madly as the rest, and

was going to hold up my rifle in order to elucidate my meaning, when, happening to look round (I cannot imagine why I did so), I saw something which made me gracefully sink back in my seat and put up my umbrella. A canoe, filled with well-armed men, came up on the other side, and two of the enemy, springing into our canoe, began to paddle her round towards Ngumbi. Oshupu's ire being stirred by this invasion, he snatched up a musket, ran forward, and hit a man with it in the face. Then his friends held his hands, and his foes knocked him down with their paddles edgewise. My men were taken out of the canoe and assigned places in those of our captors'. Quenqueza came into my canoe, sat down beside me on the mat, and tenderly embraced me. I shook my head surlily, and said *Nyawhi*—the negative in Mpongwe. But with the exception of Oshupu, who was sulky over his wounds, and I over my indignity, everybody was joking and laughing. It was wonderful how quickly good humour was restored. The men, who had still the black paint on their foreheads, were affably patting the breasts of those who were now their prisoners of war.

On arriving at the town, I set two men to sleep in the canoe and guard its contents. This was intended to show that I did not intend to stay long at Ngumbi. But I now began to understand that my movements no longer depended on myself. When I went up into the town, I expected to find a crowd in the palaver-house; but the building was empty, the streets deserted, and

the king asleep. This reliance in their power, and my inability to escape, hurt my pride more than if they had chained me hand and foot. I returned to the canoe and made Oshupu (who was so fond of fighting) an insensate offer of going off again and contesting any attempt to bring us back. But this time it was Oshupu who was wise. His blood-letting had wonderfully cooled him down, and rising from the ebony on which he had been seated, he shook his head and replied: 'These people hurt we probably if we go again.'

The next morning a grand palaver was held. The king and his cousin, who was the heir apparent, sat upon stools, the rest squatting on their heels. The king had a long staff in his hand. After he had spoken he handed it to his cousin, who passed it on in the same manner. No one interrupted the man who held the staff, and the meeting was conducted in the most orderly manner. All spoke without that hemming and hawing by which the mass of our orators are distinguished; those who were not speaking listened with attention; and when one honourable member differed from another he did not crow like a cock, or laugh like a hyæna. But then they were savages, and did not understand the arts of parliamentary debate.

After the king had spoken, his cousin rose and declaimed with great energy. Mafuk, Oshupu, and I were sitting together at a little distance from the palaver-house, and I observed that they seemed to attend with much interest to the prince's speech. When they ex-

plained its purport to me I was not astonished that they should. He was proposing that Mafuk and Oshupu should be killed. He represented that this was a deep-laid scheme of theirs to take me away from the town and to set me up at the mouth of the river. The shot which I had fired at the eagle he said had been fired by them, in contempt and defiance of the town. As for myself, he seemed to think I was not in any way responsible; and that was the general belief. Oshupu did not show any signs of discomposure, for he was really a courageous man; I had watched him in danger more than once, and he seemed never to be afraid. Besides, being a native of Gaboon, he looked down upon these provincials with contempt, and did not believe that they would dare to injure him. But with Mafuk it was quite another matter. He remembered the fable of Njabi, and the fate of Seringila.

When all the fathers of families had spoken, I went into the midst of the assembly, and through the mouth of the impassible Oshupu informed the king, his cousin, and their people, that I was the master of these two men, and that in leaving the town they had only obeyed my commands. 'If you must kill some one,' said I, addressing myself pointedly to the king's cousin, 'you must kill *me*.' Here I gave a lofty kind of laugh, as if the slaying of a white man was too absurd an idea to be entertained for a moment. Upon this the fathers laughed too.

'Now,' said I to the king, 'you wish me to stay here

because I am your dear friend, and because you wish to give me and my men goats and plantains to eat. I wish to go away that I may bring you cloth, and tobacco, and white beads for your women. Listen to a story I will tell you. A man lived with his wife. His wife loved him because he had plantains, cassada, and ground nuts plenty.' (This was a touch of nature, and there was a murmur of applause.) 'But she loved him so much that she never wished him to leave her. One day he said to her, "My heart, I must go to the plantation to-day; I must get ground nuts from my slaves who work there." And she said, "You must not go yet." But he said, "I must go;" and he went. Then she was angry, and said to her two brothers, "Go bring back my husband; he wants to see another woman." They brought him back, and he stayed. But one day she said to him, "Sir, I am very hungry; nothing lives in my stomach. Please go and get something for me to eat from your plantation." But he said, "My wife, this plantation it is far away. In three days I go, in three days I come again." So he went; but when he came back he found her dead from hunger.

'So, my friends, the plantation where I get cloth and tobacco is far away. I go now; in a moon I come back. But if I stay here you will smoke all your tobacco, you will wear out all your cloth. Then you will say Go, and I will go. But while I am gone you will have no tobacco, and you will die.'

The fathers applauded this fable, but did not allow it

to alter their views. As regarded Mafuk, the counsels of the peace party prevailed, and it was agreed that he should be in no way molested. At the close of the palaver I sent him to ask when I could go. Quenqueza replied that I could go to-morrow. To-morrow! a negro's to-morrow! The morrow came, and with it the same promise. The chief of a neighbouring village came to Ngumbi with a goat. Quenqueza introduced him to me, and made me a present of the animal. I must not think, he said, that he kept me there because he was angry with me; it was because he loved me and wished to introduce me to his friends.

The fact of my being at Ngumbi increased the importance of Quenqueza; people would come from a great distance to see *his white man*, as he called me; and none would come without presents and praise. I now saw that he intended to keep me at Ngumbi as long as I continued to 'draw;' and that might last some weeks, or even months.

I had resigned myself to my fate when the aspect of affairs suddenly changed. Twelve men had entered the town and were assembled in the palaver-house. Their features were ferocious, their hair thick and rough, and they were armed with spears. They formed a deputation from a neighbouring tribe of Bakele. At a meeting of five-chieftains some time before, Captain Lawlin had brought in a Bill for the extinction of those intestine wars which are so fatal to commercial interests. The law enacted, that whatever chieftain shed blood, or

caused blood to be shed, should pay a fine to all the others. These Bakele belonged to the confederation; they had heard of our little skirmish and the shedding of Oshupu's blood—chiefly from the nose—and they came to demand sundry fathoms of cloth and articles of crockery ware. If these were not immediately paid they would burn the town.

Quenqueza unlocked his chests and paid the fine, and I was once more free, as, of course, he would not dare to interfere with me again. He asked me when I desired to go, and I said I should go the next morning. He then walked through the town, ringing his iron bell, and crying in a loud voice that the next day he intended to escort his white man to Camma, and that all men must subscribe plantains and cassada for his use upon the journey. But poor Quenqueza was under a cloud, and his subjects refused to do anything of the kind.

The next day I again made a start. Quenqueza wished to sit with me in my canoe. I said I would have nothing more to do with him; he might go in the canoe he brought me back with. He accordingly took his big canoe which he could now man only with a few slaves, for none of the free men would go with him. He dogged me all the way down the river; but I forbad my men to speak to his. At every village which we passed a crowd was collected on the bank. At each we were requested to stop and bear witness to the infraction of the law; and at each Quenqueza was duly informed that he was fined so many fathoms, dishes, and mugs. A charming

unanimity prevailed as to the question of his guilt; there was no party spirit; each community was entitled to its mulct, and each put in its claim on the spot.

At every village, Quenqueza requested me to stay and pass the night; at every village I refused in the most decided terms. Mafuk was all for conciliatory measures. Quenqueza had the reputation of being a powerful magician, and Mafuk acknowledged that, so long as he remained in the Rembo, he (Mafuk) was a boy although he was an old man. I pointed out to him what an excellent reason this was for getting out of the Rembo. I told the men that I was well acquainted with the king's magic arts, and that they would be ineffectual against us so long as we kept moving.

That night, as I sat with my rifle across my lap, not daring to sleep, I saw the great canoe creep stealthily past us; a little time after I saw a light ahead, gleaming among the trees. It was the king's encampment, and we passed close to it. The sight of those cheerful fires, and of the men who lay round them eating their suppers, was a powerful temptation to my weary crew. Quenqueza's stately figure rose in the midst, the ruddy glare of the flames playing on his face. 'Come,' he cried, 'you are tired. Here are mats spread on the ground and the supper is prepared.'

And then arose the voices of the king's girls, melodious and enticing as those of the sirens in the ancient days, as softly singing they entreated us to come. My men wavered, but I would not yield. 'You must paddle

till daybreak,' I said; 'and if you sleep it shall be in the canoe, and I will keep watch.' Upon this they regained their courage, and cried out that they were not bushmen to sleep in the wood. Then the song ceased, and the king cursed us heartily. Mafuk trembled. I laughed at him. 'Ah!' said he, 'to-morrow I shall be a man; but to-night I am a rat.'

I thought we were now fairly rid of our man, and was beginning to doze, when I heard again the low plashing of the paddles, and the king's canoe, grey in the moonlight, again shot by. This pertinacity perplexed me at the time, but its object no doubt was reconciliation. On reaching the open river we hoisted mast and sail, and as the land-breeze was blowing, soon left him far behind. I was obliged to remain a day at Brooklyn in order to obtain a seaworthy canoe, and in the course of that day Quenqueza arrived. We met near the water. He held out his hand; I looked at him fixedly and cut him dead. This civilised manœuvre puzzled him exceedingly. He then, through Mafuk, requested an interview. I assented, and asked him what it was he wanted. He said he wished to know why I would not speak to him. I said, because he had come after me with war. He declared that I was mistaken. 'What!' said I, 'did not your men sing the war-song and wear the war-paint on their foreheads?' 'And did they not knock me down with their paddles,' said Oshupu, 'and wound me in very many places?' To all this Quenqueza replied with looks of bewilderment, and the most solemn protestations

that nothing of the kind had occurred. He certainly had come after me, and out of his love and affection induced me to return; but that was all.

This almost shook *my* gravity, but *only* for a moment. My heart was full of bitterness, and young men do not readily forgive. I refused to speak to him again, and that same evening he started for Ngumbi, having made his tedious voyage in vain. I had gone to bed early, and when I heard the shout of his canoemen (an imitation of hip! hip! hurrah!) as they pushed from the shore, I felt a savage exultation. 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.' He had put me to shame, and I had put him to shame. We were quits.

At that time I was unable to look at the question from Quenqueza's point of view, but now that I have lived more among the Africans, I can see that I was too hard upon him. He meant no harm by forcing me back to his town, and before we met at Brooklyn he had already been punished enough. I might at least have shaken hands and given him a few kind words. That parting shout often rings in my ears, and often I see the poor old man going to his chest and taking out the goods to pay the Bakele on my account—those goods which it had taken him so long to save. That visit of mine, which he thought would bring him honour and gladness, had brought him only sorrow and shame; and when I read of his death, in M. du Chaillu's second work, all this came again before me. I experienced a feeling of actual remorse. I remembered only that which was

good and kindly in his character, and thought of the prayer which he had offered up as we approached his town: '*Spirit of my father! protect this white man who comes to visit us. Preserve him from sickness while he stays. Make his heart good towards us when he goes away.*'

As the south wind blows, during the dry months, almost without intermission, I resolved to take the open sea and attempt to round Cape Lopez—an enterprise attended with some little danger in a crank canoe under heavy winds; but I was too much pressed for time to adopt the usual route—viz., by paddling through the creeks and running up under land.

At every village we passed, on our way down the river, the people came down to the bank and cried out to us that we could not cross the bar, as the sea-breezes had for some days been so strong that it was in a dangerous condition. In the afternoon we made a small sandy point on the southern lip of the river. Here my men landed, spread my rug under some shrubs, and told me that we must wait till the bar had subsided, which would probably be by five o'clock or so the next morning.

A more abominable place there could not have been. During four hours I should certainly be exposed to a burning sun, and during a whole night to mosquitoes, if I stayed; if I did not stay, I should probably be drowned. I preferred taking my chance, ordered the rug to be put back in the canoe, and told the men that.

there was not the least danger, and that across the bar we must go. They looked at one another in a very perplexed manner, and ended by yielding to the superior mind. We paddled round the point.

As we approached the bar, the frightful roaring of the waters, and the foam which was dashed incessantly into the air, where it hung like a white mist, made me doubt my chances of escape; and this doubt was not removed by the conduct of my men, who looked at the bar attentively, and then, with much deliberation, proceeded to take off their shirts and to bind them tightly round their waists, evidently preparing for a swim. As I could not swim, I was, at all events, saved that trouble.

I had often observed the skill displayed by the canoemen in crossing bars; on the other hand, I knew that they sometimes lost their nerve. In Oshupu I placed the greatest confidence, but he did not know the channel. Mafuk, on the other hand, knew the bar; but his face was already of a bluish-grey. There were sharks about this river, and he was therefore uneasy on his own account.

The men disputed loudly as we neared the white water, probably maintaining the impossibility of getting through it. I told them to hold their tongues. They waited for a favourable moment, and then darted into the breakers. Wave after wave we surmounted: I thought that they would never have done. By the skilful management of the boatmen we had almost got through

when a gigantic roller loomed before us. It was a third wave, which is always the worst. Wrenching the rudder from Mafuk, who had begun to tremble, I cheered the men to their work; they dashed along to meet it as fast as they could go, giving short sharp cries. It was a race for life, so far as I was concerned: if it broke before we topped it the canoe would be capsized. I put her head straight at it, like a horse at a fence. She sprang towards it in great leaps, like a horse's gallop. I never had a minute of such glorious excitement. Now the wave was above us like a cliff. Up, up, we went, as if we were mounting to the sky, and then down, down, down, on the dark smooth glassy water, like sliding down a mountain slope. Behind us there was a terrific crash; the wave had broken just after we had passed it, and now we were skimming through the open sea.

The men put on their shirts again, and, turning round towards me, clapped their hands. We had a fair wind all the way, and were only three days upon our voyage. I arrived at Baraka on a Saturday, slept between sheets once more, rested devoutly on the Sabbath, and sailed on Monday in the bark 'Guilford,' bound for Fernando Po.

BOOK II.

THE SOUTH COAST.

HOLLOWAYPHOBIA

IN the weary hours of the night, in the rambles of the fresh and dewy morn, or at noon as I sat in the forest on the trunk of a fallen tree, my rifle across my lap, and the black hunters sleeping like spaniels at my feet, I used often to tell myself stories, and to people the scenes round me with the phantoms of my brain.

It is not a custom of our literature to intersperse a narrative of exploration with avowedly fictitious tales; but it seems to me that these novelettes, which occurred to me when travelling, lawfully belong to the story of my travels: they are part of my *impressions de voyage*. Let not the man of science pass them over in disdain, for, although their design may be fantastic, their materials are facts; and, perhaps, it will be found that a more vivid and correct idea of savage life may be derived from them, than from many a ponderous journal and learned dissertation.

It is true that these tales deal to some extent with

European characters and scenes, but even in this they faithfully reflect the African traveller's personal experience. He does not exclusively exist among the palms and the parrots, and the negroes, but flies to fairer lands in his dreams and reveries—sits by the blazing fireside—watches the redbreast on the snow-lined window-sill—gathers cowslips in the sunny meadows, goes out to dinner parties, lounges along the boulevards, and is regaled with many a vision of memory and hope. It is only by such means we travellers keep ourselves alive; our bodies are detained in savagedom, but our minds range freely through the world: and why should we treat our readers more severely than ourselves? Are they not as exiles when they read our books, and shall we not sometimes indulge them with an interlude of home? The first chapter in a book of travels or an Eastern tale, is like the first day in a foreign land. All is curious and new; but by the time that the middle of the book is reached an ordinary mortal begins to get terribly fatigued. How delightful it is, in such stories as 'Hadji Baba' and 'Anastasius,' to meet with an English character, or even an allusion to the customs of the West! But African explorers never think of this; they make their unfortunate reader trudge after them through interminable chapters of swamp and sahara, till at last he drops (the book) down exhausted, and obtains relief from his sufferings in sleep. It is an awful thing to say, but I am firmly convinced of its truth, that there are some African travels which, like Africa itself,

have never been thoroughly explored—waste regions of print which no human eye has surveyed; and many works of travel undoubtedly there are, which have been traversed only by a few geographers and anthropologists, courageous, patient, long-suffering, determined men, capable of enduring the greatest privations in order to gather scientific facts.

But in this book the reader shall not be so harshly served. His path I strew with flowers, artificial ones to be sure, and poorly manufactured, but still the best that I can make—and offered with the best intentions to cheer him on his journey. I hope, therefore, that my innovation may be excused, and without further apology or preface shall usher into the book Mr. Archibald Potter of the United Kingdom.

The address, it may be observed, is somewhat vague, the reason being that my hero changed his abode as often as a Bedouin of the desert, or a Tartar of the steppes. He removed from one part of the British islands to another in search of peace and happiness, which he never found. He had excellent physical health, plenty of money, few relations—nothing was wanting to make him happy, had it not been for a chronic disorder of his mind. As a child, he had always been fidgety and fanciful, which faults had been aggravated by injudicious treatment in the nursery. When he grew up to be a boy, he was not sent to school, but passed his time alone or among persons whom he disliked; and so he became taciturn and gloomy, brooded

over his thoughts, and nursed his real or imaginary wrongs. But, above all, he took peculiar antipathies; it made him wretched to see certain sights or to hear certain sounds, and, instead of struggling against these peculiar feelings, he indulged them and nourished them, till finally they became his masters.

For instance, if he went out walking and saw a man with his hat sideways on his head, or a woman dressed in discordant colours, he fell into a fit of nervous irritation, which lasted an hour or even the whole day. He especially detested the barking of a dog, and the whistling of a boy. Some voices affected him so disagreeably that he would rush frantically from them. He could not bear to look upon ivy or other creeping plants, which he declared to be the reptiles of the vegetable kingdom. He gave up his club because, like all other clubs, it was habitually frequented by an old gentleman with a purple nose. He could not live long in one place, as he was sure to find something in the neighbourhood which troubled him, tormented him, and drove him away. His life was in a great measure occupied in flying from his aversions. As for his appearance, it was singular and distressing; his eyes glanced anxiously from side to side; his brow was always contracted, and his hands were never at rest, sometimes opening and shutting, sometimes raised in a nervous manner to his lips. When he heard or saw anything which annoyed him he used to mutter to himself, and sometimes gesticulated in an extraordinary manner. As may be sup-

posed, he went little into society, and when he was forty years of age, an incident occurred which removed him from it altogether.

At that time the genius of advertising was in its infancy, and one of the first who developed it was HOLLOWAY. Mr. Potter was at first much amused at the number of his advertisements; then he began to get tired of seeing the same thing so often, and at last the antipathy was formed. To such a pitch did he work himself up, by continually thinking and soliloquising upon the subject, that at last he could not see the name of Holloway without a shudder. Yet, see it he did at every hour of the day, in every newspaper he read, in every omnibus he entered, at every railway station, on every boarding and blind wall. He looked down as he walked and found it written on the paving stones; he shut himself up at home, and it came to him as a prospectus by the post, and dropped out of the books which were brought from the circulating library. All this made him so wretched that his life became a burden, and he left England altogether. But, alas! how could he hope to escape from Holloway, who advertised in every newspaper and placarded all the reading regions of the earth? It was in vain that he fled from land to land. On the Pyramids of Egypt and the Rocky Mountains, in the tea-houses of China and the bazaars of Hindostan, posters or inscriptions announced the triumphs which had been accomplished by the pills. He found them the subject of conversation among men of all nations,

and in all climes. Driven by despair, he determined to plunge into the heart of Africa, and there seek a refuge from the persecution (as he called it) to which he was subjected.

Between the Fernand Vaz and the great river Congo, or Zaire, is the kingdom of Loango. It is an agreeable country, mountainous and wooded, with a soil sometimes light and sandy, sometimes of a deep red clay. It is the southernmost point at which the gorilla is found, so far as the coast regions are concerned. Formerly the king of Loango was one of the vassals of the great Congo Empire; but the country is now, like Congo itself, divided into petty principalities. On the seaboard at that time were two Portuguese establishments dealing in slaves; and an English factory, in connection with a Bristol house, which purchased ivory and red wood from the natives.

To this strange and isolated spot came Archibald Potter, in a brig belonging to the Bristol firm. He had landed at Sierra Leone, intending to remain there a few weeks, before he set off for the interior. But as he was walking through the streets he saw posted up on some palings a crimson sheet, with *Holloway's Pills* upon it, in letters of gigantic stature. He at once left the town, although he had accepted an invitation to dinner with the Governor, and finding that there was a vessel which would sail that evening for the south coast, went on board and engaged a passage to Loango.

As soon as he arrived there he engaged a steward, or

interpreter, with a number of bearers and porters, purchased a large outfit of cloth and beads, and started off into the bush, after making arrangements with the factor respecting his future supplies.

He travelled for three days, and then came to a range of granite hills, where he had to go through a narrow pass. He was stopped by a chieftain, who was called the *King of the Gate*, and who forced him to pay a heavy toll. Having clambered up these hills, he found himself on an open plateau, about two thousand feet above the level of the sea, and a hundred and fifty miles distant from the coast. He then journeyed quietly along, till he came to a village beautifully situated upon a rising ground, and watered by a brook, which, rushing over rocks, made continual music in the air. The natives appeared industrious and gentle; their cottages were surrounded with cassada gardens, and they brought their children to him that he might give them his blessing. Now the reader ought to be informed that Mr. Potter was not insensible to agreeable impressions, and sometimes took extraordinary likings. Had our planet been more kindly composed, he would have been a man distinguished, not for his antipathies, but for his predilections. As it was, his disposition had its brighter side; and now, as he walked out in the soft and balmy air, with two pretty children holding his hands, and looking up towards his face with their deep and tender eyes, —as the sun, sinking behind the forest, shone dimly through the trees, and thus created an artificial twilight,

which reminded him unconsciously of home,—as he listened to the murmur of the waters—as he gazed upon the sweet blue sky—as the perfumes of the night-flowers rose slowly from the earth, there came upon him a feeling of calmness and tranquillity, his eyes filled with tears, he sat down in the long grass and took the children in his lap, and resolved that he would roam no farther, but remain in this peaceful village, where the boys did not know how to whistle, and the dogs did not know how to bark, and purple noses were unknown, and nobody advertised, and the arts of the hatter and tailor had not rendered human beings offensive to the eye. It is true that the négroes wore strange and repulsive trinkets in their noses and their lips, and their music was a concert of atrocious sounds; they were also inquisitive and noisy; and, in fact, their manners were such as to drive the inexperienced European into a state of distraction and despair. But, strange enough, this man who was infuriated by the little annoyances of civilised life, which other people disregard, had endured the dawdling, and mendacity, and pilferings of his attendants with all the patience and equanimity of a seasoned African explorer. Such was his delight in having escaped from Holloway's advertisements that it pervaded his whole being, and his character appeared no longer the same. For the first time in his life he resisted his disinclinations, and, whenever he caught himself muttering, recalled to his mind the happy release which he enjoyed from all the serious troubles of existence. As for bad food and

lodging he had always been a stoic in such matters, and it therefore cost him nothing to adopt the African mode of life.

The next morning he summoned the elders of the village and announced his intention of residing among them. The elders went to the palaver-house ; the people were assembled, and the news announced. Then, all rising together, they gave a cry of joy and carolled a hymn of welcome : the rest of the day was given up to music and festivity. He was lodged in the chief's house ; but the villagers, under the direction of Quissiquashi, the interpreter, a most intelligent person, built a large wooden house on piles, so that there might be a free current of air underneath, with a planked floor and a verandah. Several acres of ground were assigned to the white man as his plantation, and these were cleared by the men and women of the town. He purchased poultry and goats ; the hunters were ordered to bring him the choice parts of all that they killed. The village was thronged with visitors from other towns and hamlets, and most of these brought presents, so that the people became wealthy, the village expanded to a town. Potter was in reality its king, and the people called him their Father. This position he owed to his wealth and generosity. He relieved the poor, liberated and pensioned certain ancient slaves, and assisted the young men who wished to marry the daughters of their neighbours but could not afford to pay the requisite amount. Whenever a child was born it was placed under his protection,

and he made the usual gifts to its parents. It soon became a proverb in the neighbourhood, 'as rich as a native of Kakongo.' Many persons migrated to that town, and were admitted to the rights of citizenship. The people looked up to the white man with veneration; his wishes were at once obeyed; certain persons of whom he had conceived a dislike were banished from the town, but he consoled them with handsome presents when they went away. They had an Albino, who, according to the custom of the country, was highly prized and esteemed as being a favourite of the gods, and therefore useful to the town. But Potter objected to him as a caricature of the European, and the obedient villagers sold him to a neighbouring chief for a tract of excellent hunting land contiguous to their own estates.

While Mr. Potter remained at Kakongo he lived up to his income, which was nearly two thousand a year; every month bearers from Loango arrived with bales of goods, and also occasionally with books, clothing, and other articles from Europe. His manner of life was as follows:—At daybreak he took a cup of coffee, and went to the brook to bathe. At ten o'clock he breakfasted on game, goat, and poultry, with cassada and bananas. During the heat of the day he read books, wrote his diary, and studied the native language. In the afternoon he went out for a good long walk, dined at six o'clock, and passed the evening in conversation with the elders, or in looking at the dances of the

village girls. He had some slight attacks of ague, but on the whole enjoyed good health, and for two years was happier than he had ever been before. But then unluckily an incident occurred which reopened his old wounds and again drove him forth upon the world.

The agent at Loango had delayed sending for some boots which he had ordered, so that those which he possessed were quite worn out before the new ones arrived. Quissiquashi, who could turn his hand to anything, made him some sandals of goat-skin, and in these he shuffled about as well as he could. However, he had heard from the agent that the boots had been ordered some months, and would therefore soon arrive; as soon as they came to hand one pair would be despatched to him by a special messenger. The whole village was acquainted with their Father's distress, and looked for the arrival of the boots almost as anxiously as he did himself. One evening as he was sitting out of doors in front of the house, eating his dinner from a gourd, he saw the people dancing and clapping their hands, and then a *man*, covered with dust and bearing a package on his head, ran swiftly up the little street, and prostrated himself before him, touching the ground with the ends of his fingers; and then, sitting on his heels, reverently clapped his hands. Potter gravely returned his salutation, bowing and clapping his hands. The people gathered round them. Potter, before he opened the parcel, which he saw from its shape and size contained the boots, asked the man how long he had

been on the journey, and thanked him for the speed with which he had travelled. He also ordered the interpreter to clothe him in a handsome piece of satin-stripe, upon which the people sang a song: 'Oh, how generous is our white man! Oh, how benevolent is our Father! Blessed be the day which gave him to the earth! Blessed be the day which brought him to our town!' Then Potter told Quissiquashi to throw some beads among the women, and stooping down he untied the parcel. When he had taken off the canvas wrapper, he found that the boots were folded up in some red paper, and as he took them out of this he saw in large letters, *Holloway's Pills*, and instantly swooned away.

When he recovered his senses he found himself surrounded by natives, who were looking at him with anxious eyes; some of the women were weeping; and the fetishman of the village was ringing his iron bell, and commanding all evil spirits to depart, and never again to assail the noblest and most generous of men. He had all the people sent away, and searched for the crimson poster that he might tear it into shreds. But it was nowhere to be found. The boots and the canvas wrapper were lying on the ground in the place where he had left them, but the red paper had disappeared. He called his interpreter and asked him where it was: Quissiquashi answered that he could not say: he had been at the brook when his Father had fainted, and had afterwards no eyes to see anything but him. He said he would have it looked for at once, but returned in an

hour's time to say that no one knew anything about it. Potter offered a great reward for its discovery, but in vain. Quissiquashi maintained that nothing of the kind had ever existed, except in his master's imagination. Potter called him a madman and a fool. Quissiquashi brought forward the bystanders, who, one and all, affirmed that they had seen nothing of a red colour in the parcel when it had been opened. Potter was perplexed, and finally began to doubt the evidence of his senses, and to think that after all it had been a waking dream. The mystery in which this unhappy circumstance was now involved impressed it more deeply and painfully upon his mind. He could think of nothing else from morning to night. He had always kept his antipathy a secret, for he knew well enough how ridiculous it would make him appear; he was therefore ashamed to write to the agent at Loango and tell him not to pack up such posters; but he endured indescribable torments whenever a parcel came to him from the coast. And now the village, and all that it contained, became an abomination in his eyes: the murmuring of the brook, which could plainly be heard at his house, and the crowing of the cocks sounded always like *Holloway's Pills! Holloway's Pills!* He resolved to leave Kakongo, to travel far away inland, to cut himself off from all communication with Loango, to barter away his goods for slaves and cattle and land, and to end his days in peace and seclusion, as a patriarch among the Africans. The people of Kakongo, as may well be

supposed, were aghast at this determination, and when they had exhausted every species of persuasion, a council of elders was summoned, and it was anxiously debated whether he should not be detained by force. Quissiquashi was privately conferred with, but, as he was tired of Kakongo, did not encourage the idea. He pointed out that if they prevented the white man from going on, it would soon become known; they could not hope to keep it secret; and the neighbouring towns, through which he would have to pass, would lose a wealthy guest. They would, therefore, consider themselves aggrieved, and would combine to make war upon Kakongo, which in any case they would be glad to do on account of its extraordinary wealth. The elders could not but acknowledge the force of his objections, and also understood that he would take some pains to make his words come true, if they disregarded his advice. A large quantity of goods, suited to the inland people, were sent up by the agent from the coast to Mr. Potter, and rich farewell presents were bestowed on the people of Kakongo. The caravan again set forth, and travelled for several weeks in an easterly direction. Everywhere Potter was enthusiastically welcomed; his reputation for generosity had spread throughout the country; and in Africa the open-handed man is regarded as a saint. At last he arrived on the borders of a marshy and thickly-wooded region, and halted for a time in the town of Cabua. He was there informed that the people to the east were savage and poor, dwelling in clusters

of squalid huts, or even on platforms in the trees. Quissiquashi recommended him to settle down in Cabua; and Potter told him to superintend the building of a house, and to take charge of the goods, while he himself, with a few attendants, and some pounds of beads, would make a short journey in the forest region, to see if what the people of Cabua had alleged was true. He found the country as they had informed him, inhabited by savages living in small communities, at war with one another and the world, but fortunately too timid and superstitious to attack a man who had the appearance which they ascribed to their spirits and their gods. He was absent about two months, and determined, on his return, to make Cabua his permanent abode. He had not, it is true, been agreeably impressed with the aspect of the people; they seemed greedy and distrustful; they boasted much of their deeds in war; and they had a curious taste for adorning their town with the sculls of strangers. He lamented the hard fate which had driven him away from his beloved village. However, he had never found presents and sweet words fail to obtain him friends among the Africans, and he hoped in time to make himself as much beloved in Cabua as he had been at Kakongo.

When he entered the town, he saw the people, gaily painted and apparelled, thronging out towards the other side. He also saw, by the number of persons in the street, that the town was full of strangers. Slaves, with covered baskets beside them, were seated in the palaver-house, where guests are always received; and, as he looked

towards the plain, he saw it filled with people coming across it in single file, and bearing burdens on their heads.

He also observed that many of these visitors were suffering from sickness: some with hideous diseases of the skin; some with their feet in bandages; some were carried by slaves in baskets; while others were dreadfully emaciated, with protruding shiny eyes, as if in the last stages of consumption.

He followed the people outside the town by the western road, and saw at some distance the crowd collected round a great tree. He remembered having noticed this tree on his arrival. Its branches were hung with human sculls and with streamers of white cloth. It was therefore a Fetish, and he supposed that some kind of religious ceremony was being carried on beneath it—possibly a human sacrifice. As he approached it, he heard the music of the minstrels and the tinkling of the anklets which the dancing women wore, and the voices of the natives as they sung. He saw the waving feathers of the fetishmen, and, as the crowd opened for a moment, he caught a glimpse of something red upon the trunk of the tree. He pushed quickly through the people, who made way for him to pass; he stood before the tree, and his worst suspicions were confirmed. It was the crimson poster in which the boots had been enveloped, which had so strangely disappeared, and the remembrance of which had poisoned his existence. He gnashed his teeth with rage, and then springing forwards

pulled it from the tree, and tore it up into a hundred fragments. The people rushed upon him; the town-chief shouted an order; the young men carried him off, bruised and bleeding, to a hut, where his hands were manacled, and his feet put within the log.

The mystery of the poster must now be explained. When Quissiquashi found his master in a swoon, and learnt that the red paper was its cause, he inferred that the poster was the physical form or habitation of a powerful spirit who was hostile to Mr. Potter. All white men, it is supposed by the negroes, have intercourse with the spirit-world, and writing is regarded as a kind of magic. Quissiquashi therefore believed that the poster was a fetish of the first order, and determined to keep it in his possession. His master's anxiety to find it, and the large reward which he offered for its apprehension, only served to strengthen Quissiquashi in his determination, and to convince him that he possessed a treasure of inestimable value. He ordered the natives who had been present when the parcel was opened to declare they had not seen it, and they did not dare disobey the white man's interpreter, who had more real power than the white man himself.

Quissiquashi kept the poster in his girdle, and every night used to carefully unfold it and to say his prayers, imploring it to give him slaves and wives, and cattle and children, and to enable him to cheat his master with success, and to keep them both in good health. When Potter was absent from Cabua, Quissiquashi secretly

informed the priests of the mighty fetish which he carried in his girdle, and spread it out before them. They were startled and awestruck by the appearance of an object so different from anything they had seen before. The beautiful crimson colour, the great black stripes, the crisp rustling of the paper, which they supposed to be the voice of the demon from within, powerfully affected their imagination. With Quissiquashi's permission, they applied it to a stubborn case of neuralgia which had hitherto resisted their medicaments and charms; and the patient having faith in the medicine, his mind acted on his body and he was cured. The fetish-men reported this event to the council, and it was resolved to purchase the poster, and to make it the tutelary spirit of the town. Quissiquashi was offered a hundred newly captured slaves, which were lying in fetters ready for the market. With these and some property belonging to his master he at once set off for the Congo, and never set foot in his native land again, to the great disappointment of his relations, with whom, according to the custom of the country, he ought to have shared the proceeds of the plunder.

The crimson poster made some astonishing cures, and had already enriched the town by the influx of strangers, who were attracted by its fame. Those who were about to marry came to pray that their wives might be fruitful and obedient; those who were going on a trading journey came to pray that their slaves might not sicken or die upon the road; those who were ill, or in

any kind of tribulation, came to pray for recovery and relief. All such people brought with them *macoutas*, or rolls of grass-cloth and bark-cloth, which formed the currency of the country, and laid them beneath the tree on which the poster, during certain hours, was affixed. It will, therefore, be easily understood how great in their eyes was the crime which Potter had committed. The garment or dwelling of the Spirit was destroyed, and now it would float off into other worlds, and abandon them for ever. Such was the burden of the songs which were chanted all the night to the melancholy music of the flute, and the beating of the drum. In the morning the grand palaver was held. It was at once decided that the white man should be put to death; but they passed some hours in debating upon the manner in which it should be done. One senator proposed that the culprit should be rubbed with honey, and hung by his feet from a branch of the great tree. Another suggested that he should be hung by the neck and cut down again, half drowned and resuscitated incessantly for three days, which would make him suffer innumerable deaths. A third proposed that he should be crammed with rice till he died of repletion. This last proposal was at once rejected on account of the expense; and finally it was decided that, after a few preliminary tortures for the amusement of the women and children deputed to inflict them, Mr. Potter should be killed in the good old-fashioned way of the Cabuas—namely, by interment in the nest of the white ant. The fathers having all signified their

approbation by clapping their hands, and uttering the word *Yo!* two slaves appeared bearing a huge calabash frothing over with palm wine. This it was the office of the king or chief to drink, in order to ratify the decree which had been passed. The slaves raised it to the royal lips, the fetishmen rang their bells and cried out in a loud voice, *Prostrate yourselves or retire!* the elders threw themselves upon the ground, and in another moment Potter's fate would have been sealed, when a young fetishman hastily entered the palaver-house, and whispered in the ear of the high priest, who, placing his hand on the sacred vessel, requested the king to abstain from the wine. The elders arose; and the priest explained the reason of this interruption.

There was a merchant who went about the country exhibiting a young gorilla, a dwarf, and some other curiosities of nature. He had been attracted to Cabua by the fame of the Fetish, and in the hopes of gaining money in a town that was so crowded; he lodged with one of the priests. He had taken great interest in the trial of the white man; and when his landlord came to inform him that the council had decided that he should be put to death, he had shown signs of fright, had called his slaves together, and was now packing up his goods. To all the questions of the host he had returned no definite reply; but it was evident that his departure was connected in some way with the execution of the white man; and it was also evident, from his agitated manner, that he

dreaded some terrible disaster. The council thereupon resolved that the merchant should be summoned before them, and required to give some explanation of his conduct. The man at first would not reply, except in an evasive manner; but on being repeatedly assured that he should not be punished or molested for anything he might say, and that afterwards he should be allowed full freedom to depart, he told them that he was a native of the Congo, and that he had been brought up in a town at no great distance from the factories of the white men; that in the town next to theirs a white man who was trading in slaves had shot a native gentleman, and had been justly executed for his crime. But unhappily the ghosts of white men are furious and powerful, and they have many friends and allies among the evil spirits. Two months afterwards the chief of the town was seized with a sudden sickness and expired.

The chief of Cabua rose up, and said it was well known that white men were powerful magicians; indeed, there were some who believed them to be spirits, whom they resembled in complexion, and in the possession of superhuman power. The Fathers had all heard the statement of the merchant. Would it not be better to let the white man go? It was dangerous to injure a man who did not hesitate to attack the gods. If the Red Spirit had power to punish his enemy, let him do so; but if he did not possess that power, then certainly he would not be able to protect them from the avenging ghost.

The nephew of the chief, who was the heir-apparent, rose and said that he could not agree to the amendment. It was by no means clear to him that the town chief in question had been killed by the white man's ghost. There were many kinds of death. Some came from God, some from demons, some from witches, some from poison. It certainly appeared strange that the chief should have died so soon after the execution of the white man, but that might have been merely a coincidence.

This speech was received with a hum of applause, and the merchant, on being requested to give his opinion, replied that the chief's death might have been an accident. Had he alone died, he (the merchant) would not have attached much importance to the fact; but as soon as the heir-apparent mounted on the throne, the roof of the palace fell upon him and dashed out his brains.

The heir-apparent of Cabua rose again, and said, that having heard the full circumstances of the case, he felt himself no longer justified in opposing the amendment of his royal brother. He was still of opinion that one death might fairly have been considered accidental; but two deaths—and the second of such a prodigious and lamentable kind—could not be accounted for in such a manner. He therefore also proposed that the white man should be set free.

However, the chief had only the casting vote, and the heir-apparent voted as the others. The Council in general were not inclined to adopt the opinions of their

leaders, and after some whispering had passed between them, a very aged man rose up and spoke as follows:—The town was placed in a most unfortunate dilemma, for, if they killed the white man, they exposed their honoured chief and his nephew to the anger of his ghost; but, on the other hand, if they allowed the white man to go free, the Red Spirit would remain unavenged, and would pour out its wrath upon them all. He therefore considered that of the two evils they should choose the lesser (here the chief and his nephew began to sweat profusely), and do that which was plainly and palpably right that they should do. The benefactor of their town had been injured in their town; it was their duty to avenge that injury, whatever the cost might be. He acknowledged that the cost was very great; but life at the best was short and uncertain; and he felt sure that their revered chief and his honourable nephew would abstain from resisting a measure which, though not gratifying to themselves, was necessary for the welfare of the public.

This speech was applauded by the elders; the chief and his nephew were silent; the High Priest beckoned to the slaves, and again they brought up the sacred gourd frothing over with palm wine. But the merchant rose up, and humbly desired the Council that the white man should not be put to death till he himself was fairly out of the town and its environs. His request was accorded; and he was turning to depart, when the High Priest said that he wished to ask him one question:

'Why, O merchant, do you desire to leave us? and what have you to fear, since you are neither the reigning monarch nor yet the heir to the crown?' To this the merchant replied that it was not the two kings alone who had suffered from the fury of the white man's ghost; after the palace had fallen, other calamities had taken place. A thunderbolt had struck the temple and rolled down the images of the gods from their pedestals, and had slain the High Priest as he ministered at the altar. Then had come the Blue Sickness (the Small Pox), and had carried off the wise men and elders, and had made the handsome women hideous, and had made the strong men weak. And when the sickness had passed away, their enemies, seeing them diminished and defenceless, had fallen upon them and sold them all to the white men at the Congo. It might have been an accident, it might not have been owing to the white man's ghost; what his opinion might be upon that point he was not called upon to declare; he had not the honour of belonging to the Council; only this he would say, that he wished to leave Cabua as quickly as possible, and his feet should not rest till he had safely passed beyond their lands.

Not only the elders heard these dreadful words, but also the people who were crowded round the palaver-house, sitting on their heels. The town fell into lamentation; the strangers who had remained to see the execution at once took up their bundles and prepared to depart; the elders crowded round the merchant and

implored him to take away the white man, and to turn him loose into the sea, that he might swim off to his own native land, and leave them in peace. At first the merchant refused to accept so dangerous a companion; but when they offered him the property of the white man also (for they were afraid to keep it themselves) he consented, though with evident reluctance. Mr. Potter was accordingly set free, and accompanied the merchant, whose slaves were staggering under the weight of goods which had been given him. Our hero, as may be supposed, was bewildered at his sudden release, and still more by the behaviour of his companion; who as soon as they were clear of the town told his slaves to stop, and then, lying on the ground, rolled over and over in convulsions of laughter, till the tears ran down his cheeks. He then got up and walked slowly on; but sometimes, when his eyes rested on Potter or the goods which had once belonged to him, he burst out again, and said to his slaves, who seemed to understand his merriment, and joined in it with equal heartiness—'*O the people of Cabua, they are wise, they are very wise! O venerable elders, the wisdom of a goat is nothing to your wisdom!*' And so he went on, rubbing his eyes, and holding his sides, and only laughing the more when Potter (who could now speak the language) asked him the reason of his hilarity.

They travelled in a south-westerly direction, through a land of large and flourishing warrior towns, which enriched themselves by annual forays among the degraded

natives of the forests and the swamps. No white man had ever appeared in that country before, which circumstance the merchant turned to account. He told Potter that he saw how much he was annoyed when the people crowded round to see him, and that in future he should not be stared at except by the merchant's personal friends. He ordered a litter to be made and curtained round with cloth, and in this he concealed his captive whenever they approached a town. He then marched in solemn procession through the street, the dwarf on his right hand, the young gorilla on his left, and two of his slaves with masks on their faces gambolling before him. Behind him marched a loud-voiced youth, who rang a bell, and cried from time to time, 'Behold, O my brothers, the wise and learned Kafuka, the greatest of magicians. He understands the voices of the beasts and the birds; he gathers wonders out of every land. Behold this ape, whose ancestors were men degraded to this bestial shape because of their idleness and filthy habits. Behold this dwarf, which he purchased from the king of Urugu for three hundred macoutas, four hundred goats, and five hundred virgins of a spotless black. In that closed litter is the white man of the sea, whom Kafuka drew forth from the salt water by means of his magic arts, and whom he will exhibit this evening to the princes of the people and the elders of the town.'

And then Kafuka would say in a deep calm voice, 'My children, all that this young man has told you is the

truth. I am the wisest of magicians: it cannot be disputed; and in that litter is the greatest of all earthly marvels.'

As soon as a hut had been assigned to the merchant, he concealed Potter in the inner chamber. On the first day he showed him to the patriarchs, and in this manner paid the tribute which was always demanded of travellers in return for permission to pass, and for accommodation in the town. On the second day he showed him to the people, who made payment in poultry, vegetables, cloth, and goats, according to their means. He thus journeyed slowly along, buying a slave here and a slave there, with Potter's goods, till at last he had collected a considerable number. But in the mean time he remarked that the white man was wasting away; he refused his food, and was scarcely able to drag himself along. Kafuka therefore determined to push on at once to the Congo, and there to dispose of his slaves, and to obtain a ransom for his captive. He halted in a town called Makondo, near the Falls, and leaving Potter in charge of the chief, took his slaves to the factories, sold them to the Portuguese, and then spoke to them of a white man he had seen imprisoned at Makondo. He found to his delight that Potter was perfectly well known, as a rich eccentric character, and that his credit was unbounded. The Portuguese factors wrote the prisoner a letter to say that they would be happy to advance the ransom upon his note of hand as soon as the amount was fixed, and that if they paid the ransom

they would take care that he should be at once set free. But until the ransom had been demanded and paid they were powerless to help him. They sent with this letter some wine and spirits, coffee, and tinned meats.

As soon as Kafuka returned to Makondo, he arranged with the chief that the ransom should be shared between them. He then ordered two natives of the town to go into Potter's hut, to bind him hand and foot, to give him a flogging, and afterwards to light a smoky fire of red peppers and damp wood.

A few hours afterwards he went to see his captive, who was in a miserable state, spluttering and coughing, with the tears running down his eyes. Kafuka also wept, wherein he was assisted by the smoke, and lamented the cruel fate to which his dearest friend was now exposed. A woman, he said, had died in the town, and the priests had declared it was owing to the presence of the white man. Hence the treatment to which he had been subjected, and he (Kafuka) feared that it would be his turn next. He then unloosed Potter's hands, and put out the fire, and gave him the letter of the Portuguese (the liquors and provisions he had consumed upon the road). Potter inquired how much the people of Makondo demanded for the ransom. Kafuka replied that they demanded goods to the value of a thousand pounds. At the same time the chief, who had been privately instructed by Kafuka, came into the hut attended by two young men with whips of hippopotamus skin in their hands. 'Who,' cried the chief, 'has

presumed to loose the murderer's hands? Who has dared to extinguish the fire?' Kafuka humbly entreated him to listen. The white man, he was sure, would at once order the ransom to be paid. One or two blows from the devilish weapons which the young men brought with them dissipated any doubts that Potter himself might have entertained upon the subject. He at once called for ink and paper, which was supplied by an educated native, the secretary of the town. He wrote the order for the ransom; the goods were paid, and the prisoner was received by the Portuguese on neutral ground, all parties being bound by oath to fulfil the terms of the contract, and to separate in peace.

The ransom was paid to the chief, for Kafuka had no legal position or power in the country, and, when he demanded his part, was tied up and flogged, and smoked, as the white man had been before him, on a charge of having broken some law enacted for the occasion. He was declared a criminal, his goods were confiscated, while he himself was sold as a slave, and ended his miserable life in Brazil.

As for the people of Makondo, the immense riches which they obtained from the ransom and the confiscation were quite out of proportion to their power. As they had trumped up an accusation against Kafuka, so the neighbouring towns trumped up one against them, declared war, seized all the booty, and destroyed the town. But these people also quarrelled about the division

of the spoil ; they all went to war with one another, and in ten years time a fertile and well-populated region became a lonely wilderness inhabited only by the jackal and hyæna, with here and there a pile of ashes marking the place where a town had been.

In the meantime Mr. Archibald Potter returned to England, and was placed under medical care. His constitution appeared to be broken up, but he was still more seriously affected in his mind. It would naturally be supposed that the hardships and indignities, the torture and starvation, he had endured would have made him forget his absurd antipathy to Holloway's advertisements. But they were now associated in his mind with the remembrance of his unexampled sufferings. He did not venture to go out for fear of seeing an advertisement ; he could not even bear to see the letter H, and was therefore unable to read a newspaper or a book. When an old friend came to see him and said, '*Hollo!* old fellow, how are you?' he fell into a convulsive fit, and his doctor having said that he would send him some *Pills*, he was seized with a similar attack. But, strangely enough, all other aversions seemed to have been swallowed up in this one. The dog of the house barked ; the son of the landlady whistled ; and his hired nurse had a very purple nose. All this he did not mind ; it was only Holloway that he abhorred.

This went on for at least three years, and then he was suddenly, speedily, and completely cured. *He took*

the Pills, and from that time forth he was an altered man; his physical health was completely restored; his manner was calm and self-possessed; he was never troubled with nervous agitation of any kind; and nothing could be alleged against him except that he was a little too fond of praising Holloway's Pills, and of taking the boxes from his waistcoat pocket and expatiating on their merits, and also of reciting the advertisements, a selection of which he always carried with him. Respecting his recovery a long and interesting correspondence appeared for some weeks in the 'Finsbury Gazette,' between the homœopathists on the one hand, and the advocates of Holloway's Pills upon the other. The latter maintained that these Pills were able to cure every disease under the sun, mental or physical, at any stage of that disease. They had cured Mr. Potter of his complaint, as they had cured thousands before him, and would cure thousands that were yet to come. There is only one medicine, they said, and Holloway is its distributor. To this the homœopathists replied that Mr. Potter's case attested the truth of the homœopathic dogma, *Similia similibus curantur*. Holloway had made him ill, and Holloway had made him well. The pills had only been beneficial because they had previously been injurious. Any fetid and poisonous matter would, under similar circumstances, have had the same effect.

The advocates of Holloway were not slow in pointing

out the flaw in this argument. It was not the pills which had made Potter ill—the pills never made any one ill—but the advertisements. According to the principles of homœopathy he ought to have been placed in a room padded with the advertisements; or he ought to have had them read to him all day long. To this the homœopathists somewhat lamely replied by an appeal to the intimate connection which exists between the affections of the body and the mind.

As for Mr. Potter's medical attendant, who had made a hundred guineas by him every year, and had set up a brougham upon the strength of it, he can ill afford to lose so good a patient, and flies into a rage whenever his opinion is asked about the case. The disease, he declares, is not removed; it has merely taken a new phase. Potter always had been a madman, and he always would be one; and those who believed in Holloway's pills, or homœopathy, were very little better. There ought to be an act of parliament to put down such abominable quackery; it was a crying shame that qualified practitioners should have the bread taken from their mouths in this scandalous and unseemly manner. Never does the worthy doctor, who is now straitened in his circumstances, pass by the establishment of Holloway without shaking his fist through the window of his brougham, which vehicle will soon convey him into the insolvent court if he does not give it up; never does he read one of their advertisements without a curse. The firm still advertise immensely; he there-

fore curses very often, and his family and friends are beginning to fear that this continual irritation will affect his brain, and that he will become a victim to that strange disease which forms the title of this story, and from which Mr. Archibald Potter was so happily released.

THE 'EMILIA'

THE bark 'Guilford' dashed merrily along with a fair wind towards Fernando Po. A man-of-war visits that island from the South Coast every month to meet the mails, and I intended to beg a passage in her to the River Congo, or to the city of San Paolo de Loanda.

But it so happened that a passenger on board had left a portmanteau at Principe, a Portuguese island which lay at no great distance from our course. The agent conferred with the master, and it was agreed that the 'Guilford' should touch at the island. We reached it in less than twenty-four hours, and immediately went on shore. The portmanteau was recovered; we paid our visits to the six white men who inhabited the colony, and were about to return, when someone observed that if I wished to go down to the South Coast, my best plan would be to cross over to the neighbouring island, San Thomé, which I could do in a vessel that was lying in the harbour. Steamers ran once a month from Lisbon to Loanda, touching at San Thomé. I accepted the suggestion, and bade farewell to my friends of the 'Guilford.' But when that vessel had sailed, I suddenly remembered that one of my objects in going to Fernando Po was to cash a bill.

As it was I had only twenty pounds with me; I could not speak Portuguese; I had letters for no one in Loanda; I had but little baggage, having left my bulky matters in Gaboon; my wearing apparel was by no means of the best; and, in short, I felt assured that wherever I might go appearances would be very much against me. However, it was useless to waste thought on future troubles, so I took my companion's arm and went with him to his house.

This gentleman was a mulatto, to whom I had been introduced by the passenger of the portmanteau, who had himself previously been his guest. I believe that this worthy mulatto had surreptitiously detained the luggage, and that Mr. —— had handed me over to his tender mercies partly out of a feeling of disregard for myself, and partly from a spirit of magnanimity, to show that he bore no grudge. My host kept a small shop, and had two plantations with seventy slaves. Their labour enabled him to live on the produce of his farm: he drank his own coffee and cocoa, and ate baked yams as a substitute for bread, with quantities of *farinha* or cassada flour, which closely resembles sawdust. He occasionally regaled himself with poultry or goat-mutton, but his food was chiefly vegetables. His shop contained clothing, furniture, and liquors; and I, having led a life of extreme self-denial for some time, took a sudden fancy for a glass of champagne. I asked my friend if he had any; he at once replied in the affirmative, and, opening a champagne bottle with a corkscrew, poured me out a

still, muddy wine, which I recognised at sight as a viño branco of the lowest order. To all my protestations that this was not champagne, or anything like it, he replied by pointing to the label on the bottle. The label certainly was correct enough, and the price was that of the very best Clicquot.

A young lad, who acted as my guide, on hearing of my wish, told me champagne was not to be bought upon the island, but the collector of customs had some, and would be sure to open a bottle if I paid him a visit, which, in any case, he said I ought to do. The next morning we inspected the barracks, the churches, and the cemetery, and then, walking through the town in the opposite direction, crossed a stream by stepping-stones, on which washerwomen were pounding chemises in the picturesque but destructive manner of the tropics. We then passed through a lovely grove of cocoa-nut trees, ascended a hill-path skirted by plantations, and entered the dwelling of the collector. He asked me at once whether I would take gin or champagne, and on receiving my answer brought in a pint bottle, on which was inscribed *Fine Crab Apple Cider*. There is acidity in the very name of this abominable liquor, and although I had not to pay for it like the viño branco, I had to drink it, which was worse. The word for cider in Portuguese is cidra. The collector, therefore, must have known what it was, but as it came from the States, he probably imagined that the label was written in American, and that I did not understand that language. My

readers may smile, but the ignorance of the Latin race respecting the great Republic can scarcely be exaggerated. '*Ah, c'est une grande ville, l'Amérique!*' said a polite French tradesman to a Transatlantic friend of mine who had announced his nationality.

My last adventure with champagne in the Portuguese possessions was in the interior of Angola. I was breakfasting with a mulatto planter who called for that wine in honour of the Englishman, much to my annoyance, as there were thirteen persons at the table, whose glistening eyes betokened an intention of drinking as much as they could get. Champagne on the coast is always poured out in tumblers, and I feared that my generous host would incur considerable expense on my account. But I was rather astonished when only a pint bottle was brought in, and still more when liqueur glasses were served. The pint went merrily round, and the guests had two or three bumpers apiece.

The collector gave us an excellent dinner, and it was dark before we returned to the town. It was a feast-day, or rather feast-night, and the streets were tastefully illuminated by means of oranges hollowed and filled with palm oil and a cotton wick. We met a procession of girls with handkerchiefs in turban fashion round their heads, and flowing cotton robes, playing on musical instruments, and singing as they went. They were exceedingly handsome, with large brown antelope eyes which would have bewitched a saint: imagine their effects upon a sinner! We followed them into the upper

chamber of a house where they danced all night before the image of the Virgin.

And why should not religion attend us in our mirth as well as in our sadness? In an Arabic MS. which a negro translated to me at Sierra Leone, Allah is made to say, 'There are three things which I love—the heart that fears me; the body that is never weary of adoring me; and the eyes that are never dry from tears.' But those are servile and unkindly minds by which this gloomy god has been created. The Bon Dieu of France appears to me a more correct interpretation of the Unknown Power. There is indeed a divinity in sorrow, but are not smiles and laughter also heaven-born? Surely, just as much so as the sunshine and the flowers. True religion is but another name for love—love of our fellow men and women—love of the poor weak animals which sustain our wants—love of the Power who governs and disposes of our lives. And while certain natures are equally hardened by happiness, or soured by misfortune, the truly religious heart pours forth its sweets whenever it is touched by an emotion; its sorrow is tenderness; its joy is geniality, and both are but another name for love.

Upon this delightful little island morality and misery seemed to be equally unknown. These laughter-loving girls were slaves in name, but they pined not for liberty, and were free from certain social restrictions by which European women are enslaved. They were sinful according to our ideas, but they were sinless according to their own, and therefore they were happy. Their

easy morals and their light attire were authorised by the customs of their country. They did not offend against their consciences, and in this consists the difference between a savage and a civilised community. Those freethinkers in morals who suppose that the sufferings of women betrayed and forsaken can be removed by the abrogation of existing social laws, sadly misunderstand the history of man; as well attempt to revive the innocent nudity of our barbarous ancestors as the harmless license of a former age. Dress began as decoration; female virtue was at first a kind of property; but both are now equally established, and to attack either is not to advocate progress but retrogression. Every vice is in fact a vestige of animal or savage life. The sexes may yet be placed on an equal footing in this respect, not by granting to women the dangerous liberty of men, but by subjecting men to the severe and salutary discipline of women. It is needless to say that we are still very far from that; but it was only the other day that drunkenness and gambling, and ruining tradesmen, were fashionable peccadilloes, and dissipation may, perhaps, in the twentieth century be no longer *à la mode*. How many men there are, mastered and ruined by their passions, attempting in vain to tear these Laocoon-serpents from their souls, who look back with a sigh to their innocent days, and wish that their youth-time had been more sternly supervised.

On the fourth day the vessel was ready to sail, and I bade farewell to my hospitable friend, who in one way

or another had managed to obtain a considerable part of my twenty pounds. The 'Mondego' was a craft of most fascinating appearance, with slim black hull, rakish tapering masts, and a topsail fluttering like a white bonnet. She was the property of the famous Senhor Pereira, to whom four days afterwards I was introduced at San Thomé.

He had begun life as mate or master of a slave-ship, which was taken by an English cruiser, and he was set ashore, according to rule, at the first convenient spot, which happened to be the island of Principe. He had two dollars in his pocket, and he had only his pocket in the world. He came over to San Thomé, and speculated so cleverly in 'bales,' black ivory, or 'dry goods,' and applied himself so closely to business—never touching wine or taking any kind of pleasure—that he was now a rich man, the owner of many slaves and of two fine vessels, and (in dollars) a millionaire.

He kept open house and an excellent table, to which I was invited once, and only once, for I was down in the black books of the Portuguese. Hotels did not exist, and the residents would not receive me in their houses. No people are more hospitable than these planters, but they supposed me to be a spy. It was certain I was not a missionary; I was not a trader; I was not a consul; I had brought no letters of any kind; my movements were mysterious. They could not believe my own story, that I was travelling upon the west coast of Africa for my amusement; it was therefore

certain that I had been sent by Palmerston to watch the operations of the slave trade, and perhaps to communicate secret intelligence to the commanders of the squadron.

Principe was peaceful and secluded; slavery there existed in a gentle patriarchal form. But San Thomé being situated on one of the world's highways, good business was done there in the produce of the plantations. Slaves were necessary to the welfare of the island, and these were brought over in cutters and large canoes from Cape Lopez and the Fernand Vaz. This method of running cargoes had hitherto escaped the attention of the cruisers, and it was not desired that I should find it out. Hence I was detained on board the 'Mondego,' a prisoner in a polite way, and continued to joke and ask questions about the slave trade, for at that time I had no idea of the suspicions which had been formed against me.

One day the captain pointed to a schooner lying in the harbour, and informed me that she was about to sail for San Paolo de Loanda. The mail would not arrive for three weeks to come, and by that time the 'Emilia' would have reached Loanda. It would be more economical for me to go by her; and I would not find it more dull in one ship than in the other. I at once adopted the suggestion, which indeed I could scarcely reject, and took my luggage on board the 'Emilia.' In the evening the vessel got under weigh, and at the same time the dinner-bell rang. I could plainly see the captain

and first officer walking up and down on the poop of the 'Mondego.' When they saw me they took off their hats, and waved them in the air, and shook their handkerchiefs, and made me many profuse bows; after which they turned round to each other, and it seemed to me that they were laughing. I went down to dinner, and, when it was over, read a book for some little time. It was now nearly dusk, and I thought I would go on deck, and have a last look at the island of San Thomé. To my horror I found it was a stark calm; the vessel had scarcely sailed a hundred yards; the captain and the chief officer were still on the poop of the 'Mondego,' and they again saluted me with many bows, and again burst into fits of laughter. This merriment perplexed me, but I discovered its meaning before we arrived at Loanda. By putting me on board the 'Emilia,' they had put me out of the world for a considerable space of time. The voyage, which the steamer made in four days, occupied us fifty-six, and these two months were not the most agreeable I ever spent. The bunks were without bed linen, and so infested with cockroaches that I preferred to sleep in the open air; and the deck being choked up with water-casks and planks, I could not even enjoy the usual sailor's promenade. We finished our provisions on the way, and would have been starved had we not caught some shark and albicore. But evil lodgings and scanty fare were slight hardships compared with the vacancy and weariness of such a life.

The 'Emilia' was a slow and awkward vessel; but our tardy progress was chiefly owing to the fact that we were *off the road*. There are regular routes across the ocean, from which ships do not usually stray, and in which they are never becalmed for any length of time. These sea-roads, lying in the channels of the wind, are covered with vessels passing to and fro. But such publicity was not desired by the bashful and retiring 'Emilia,' who did not wish to be seen, and whose modesty especially shrank from the idea of being searched. In other words, she was a slaver, and therefore, instead of sailing along close under the coast, or keeping well out to sea, she held a middle course between the two. But it so happened that neither the master nor mate were very brilliant observers, and every day when they took the sun arrived at a different result. One afternoon we sighted land, quite an unexpected pleasure, and it was hailed with outcries and gesticulations. We were now on the cruisers' ground. Presently a man cried out that there was a sail in sight, and we could see from the deck, without a glass, the masts of the vessel, which looked like tiny twigs above the horizon. A quarter of an hour afterwards, something rose above them like a small cloud. The captain uttered a savage oath, and gave an order. The men, also swearing, ran to the yards. The 'Emilia' turned, and moved quickly through the waters, with her stern towards San Paolo de Loanda.

I now began to understand. The distant sail was a cruiser; she had seen us and got up steam, which is done

only when these vessels chase. We had no slaves on board, and the ship's papers were correct; but, according to the treaty, vessels may be captured if they are found to be 'equipped for the traffic,' such articles of equipment being a slave deck laid, or a quantity of planks fit to be used for that purpose; shackles and handcuffs; bolts or bars used for securing the hatchways; hatches with open gratings, so as to give air to the unfortunate beings confined below; more divisions or bulkheads than are necessary for merchant vessels; a larger quantity of farinha or rice, of water or water-casks, and of mess-kits or wooden bowls than is required for the crew; also a boiler of great size; medicines in excess; many dozens of tin or wooden spoons; casks of vinegar; syphons or long tin suckers, used by the slaves to drink from the leaguers, so as to avoid the waste of water occasioned by their struggling and pushing when permitted to drink out of iron cups; wooden clappers, used instead of a bell to summon the slaves to their meals, and to warn them to desist when quarrelling or making a noise.[1]

Now, as I have already mentioned, the deck was completely filled with water-casks and planks. If, therefore, we were boarded in the daylight we should certainly be seized; but if boarded after dark we might escape. It was now late in the afternoon.

The man-of-war crept towards us; we could see the white sails above her black thin hull, which resembled the body of a snake. But the wind was fresh, and the

[1] 'Letters of a Lady from Sierra Leone.'

'Emilia,' as if aroused from her usual apathy, sent the bubbles flying past at clipper speed.

Suddenly the wind dropped. The captain, who was steering us himself, gave a horrible look and bent his head close down upon the wheel, and covered his face with his arm. The sailors collected in a group, and looked at the coming ship in blank dismay. Some of them glanced at me; they thought that I was in the trade; and they knew that American and English slavers were pirates according to the law.

We could see the white water dashed up by the paddles. Then a sailor gave a cry; the captain spun the wheel round; the wind revived; the 'Emilia' clove the sea; the sun disappeared; the stars rushed forth; and night came on swift and sudden as the night of the stage, when the gasman turns a screw and the footlights are extinguished.

And then looming through the dim air we saw a magnificent sloop of war, which grew upon our eyes without perceptible sound or motion. When she came nearer we heard the splashing of her paddles and the water dashing from her bows. A lantern was hung over our stern that she might not run into us. She glided past, her hull blazing with lights, and winding gracefully round, abated her speed. The captain asked me to act as spokesman; upon which I went up and stood by the gang-way.

Then came a clear commanding voice out of the darkness—

'What vessel's that?'

'The "Emilia" of Lisbon.'

'Heave to!'

Brief and explicit, thought I, and signified to the captain that he had better square his yards. We heard the harsh barking voice of the boatswain, and the rattling of ropes, as a boat was lowered from the davits, and the thud with which it fell into the water. Then the sound of oars, and something dark which approached us through the blazing phosphorescent sea. The lantern was hung over the side, and an officer sprang upon the deck, his sword-hilt gleaming in the light.

I showed the lieutenant the way to the cabin, where the captain had gone down to get the papers ready. The water-casks were not visible. A small midshipman, with a book under his arm, who had followed the lieutenant, said in rather a faint voice, 'Shall I come down too, sir?' and received a gruff 'Yes' in reply. Poor little fellow! I dare say he thought that slavers' cabins were places where naval officers were quietly disposed of.

The papers were shown to the lieutenant, who examined them very carefully, especially the custom-house clearance. He then took the boarding book from the midshipman and filled up the usual forms, the vessel's name and port, tonnage, number of crew, and cargo, asking especially what ports she had touched at, and whether she had any guns.

This being over, and the Emilia honourably acquitted

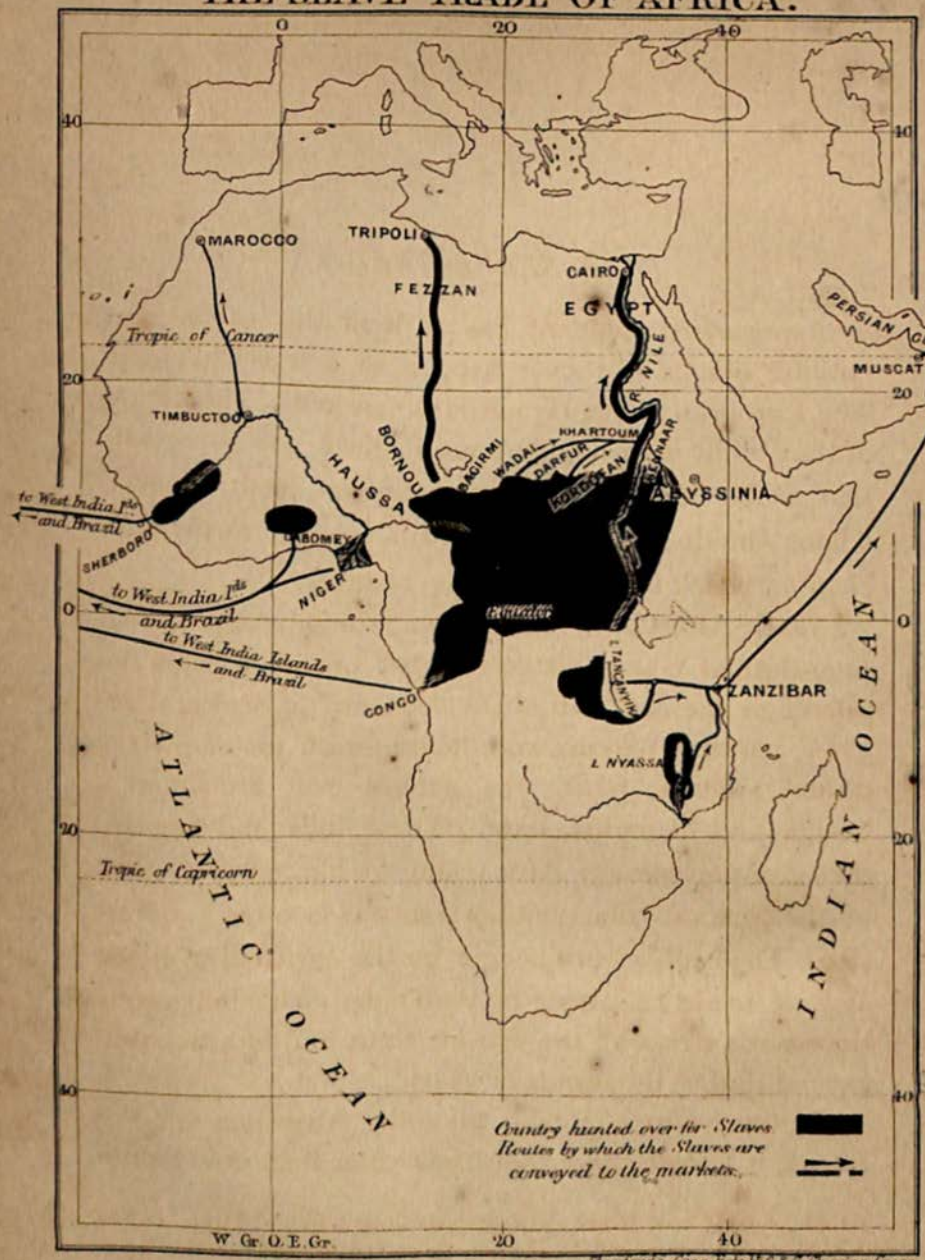
for want of the necessary evidence, and the lieutenant, no doubt, inwardly damning his bad luck, the captain desired me to ask where we were. The lieutenant turned round to the midshipman and said, 'What was the latitude and longitude at noon, Mr. ——?' The young gentleman gave the position, which the lieutenant marked in pencil on our chart: upon which the captain called the mate the son of a something, and the mate replied with a volley of adjectives anything but complimentary. The captain had supposed that we were more to the north, the mate had supposed we were more to the south —neither of them anywhere near the mark.

Having discharged my duty as interpreter, I asked the lieutenant the name of his ship, and what Burton was doing, and moreover enquired after various commanders whose acquaintance I had made in the Bights. To these questions the officer replied with the utmost circumspection. He plainly supposed that I was connected with the 'Emilia,' which, of course, he knew to be a slaver, though not seizable, and attributed my curiosity to anything but disinterested motives. His mistake was natural enough, and the laugh on his side, not mine. By no means wishing to be taken for a slaver, I asked more questions, and he became more reticent, though always in a courteous and gentlemanly manner. At last I told him my name, and said that I had been lately spending a few months after the gorilla.

This was too much for any man to bear. His face

gleamed with sudden intelligence, and he said, with an ah !-you-can't-take-*me*-in kind of smile, 'Well, I don't think gorillas are likely to come in your way, but' (here his face beamed with triumph) 'you may pick up a few bits of black ivory!'

THE SLAVE TRADE OF AFRICA.



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THE SLAVE TRADE

THE preceding incident has at least this value, that nothing like it will ever happen to a traveller again. The European Slave Trade is at an end. The nature of that traffic is so singular, and its history so important, that a few pages must here be given to the subject. Those who do not like essays can pass on to the next chapter, which is of a very different kind.

Black Africa or the Soudan may roughly be described as an insular table-land surrounded on all sides by the sahara or the sea. It is divided into agricultural regions, pastoral regions, and dense forest mountains or dismal swamps, where the natives ever remain in a savage and degraded state. These hills and fens are the slave-preserves of Africa, and are hunted every year by the pastoral tribes with whom war is often a profession. The captives are bought by the agricultural tribes and are made to labour in the fields. This indigenous slave-trade exists at the present time, and has probably existed during thousands of years.[1]

In the negro countries adjoining Abyssinia and the Desert, a foreign slave trade was also instituted before

[1] See, for a good instance of indigenous slave trade, Magyar, 'Reisen in Süd-Africa,' p. 298, and also my exploring journey in the second volume.

history begins. The armies of the Pharaohs penetrated into the Soudan, and captured negroes, as the monumental pictures show.[1] The Abyssinians, themselves a Shemitic race, darkened by intercourse with concubines from Central Africa, have always hunted the black people. The Tuaricks and tawny Moors, the rovers of the desert, made frequent forays into Negroland for the purpose of obtaining slaves, exacted them as tribute from conquered chiefs, or sometimes bought them fairly with horses, salt, and woollen clothes. When the Carthaginian empire was established, a mighty impulse was given to this trade, for on one occasion the government purchased no less than five thousand slaves for their galleys of war.[2] Negro slaves were also imported into Greece and Rome, and were prized as articles of luxury on account of their singular appearance, their docile behaviour, and their affectionate disposition.

In the middle ages Arab settlements were planted on the east coast of Africa; negroes hunted negroes in the bush, and thousands of slaves were exported in dhows to India and the countries of the Persian Gulf, and were formed into regiments by the Caliphs of Bagdad.[3]

Mahometan kingdoms were also established almost across Africa, a little above the parallel 10°. These kingdoms, beginning from the west, were Melli and Songhay (since deceased), Haussa, Bornou, Waday, Darfur, Kordofan, and Sennaar. All of them hunted

[1] Wilkinson's 'Ancient Egyptians.' Letters of Lepsius.
[2] Heeren's 'African Nations.'
[3] Guillain, 'Afrique orientale.'

the pagan countries to the south, and sent coffles or caravans across the desert to Egypt or the Barbary States.[1] The Venetians bought live cargoes in Tripoli and Tunis, and sold them to the Moors of Spain. When the Moors were expelled from that country, the trade was continued, and negroes were still to be seen in the markets of Seville.

The Portuguese sailed to the slave-land itself, and imported ten thousand negroes a year before the voyage of Columbus.[2]

America was discovered; the mines of St. Domingo were opened, and as the Spaniards had often negro slaves in their possession, it so happened that some of these were also set to work. It being ascertained that a negro could do as much work as four Indians, it appeared philanthropic, and it was certainly profitable, to spare the poor Indians (who nevertheless soon afterwards became extinct) and import negroes. Thus the slave trade of Europe and Asia was extended to the New World. When other European nations obtained plantations, they also required negro labour, and for that purpose alone established settlements in Guinea. Elmina supplied Manhattan and Surinam; Cape Coast Castle supplied Barbadoes, Jamaica, and Virginia; the Senegal supplied Louisiana and the Antilles. Even Denmark had an island or two in the West Indies, and a fort or

[1] Denham and Clapperton, Barth, and especially Mohammed el Tounsy, 'Voyage au Wadai.'

[2] Stanley's 'Voyages of Vasco da Gama,' in Hakluyt Society's Collection.

two upon the Gold Coast. The Spaniards alone had no establishments in Guinea, and were supplied by a contract or assiento, which at one time was enjoyed by the British crown.

This one fact is sufficient to show what immense progress has been made in morals during less than two hundred years. Slavery appeared to the Greeks a natural institution, and even Aristotle believed that certain barbarous people had been created to be slaves.[1] The Christians of the middle ages denounced the practice of enslaving Christians, and Moslems were always forbidden to enslave Moslems ;[2] but the idea that slavery in itself was wrong had not yet dawned upon the world, though it may have been entertained by a few ecclesiastics acquainted with the Roman law of nations. So far as theology is concerned, slavery must always have remained an insoluble enigma ; for while the anti-slavery party might quote vague maxims—such as the golden rule—and maintain with perfect truth that slavery is opposed to the spirit of Christianity, on the other hand the pro-slavery theologians could show that slavery was undoubtedly of Divine origin, *since* Jehovah Himself had enacted laws for its regulation ; and the proof that it had not been annulled in the New Dispensation might be found in the writings of St. Paul, who had ordered

[1] The passage is alluded to in Mill's 'Subjection of Women.'

[2] Slave-traders in Central Asia, according to Vambéry, and in Central Africa, according to Mohammed el Tounsy and Escayrac de Lauture, often violate this law of the Koran. The slave trade has been formally condemned by Mohammedan doctors of the law.

slaves to be obedient, and had sent back a runaway slave to his master. But when scepticism had enlightened the eighteenth century, and men were taught to seek for moral guidance, not in the customs of a barbarous people, but in fixed principles of right and wrong, negro slavery could no longer be supported by Sinai laws and fabulous legends,[1] and the philanthropists were enabled to complete the work which the philosophers had begun. The slave trade was at first abolished by the King of Denmark in 1792; secondly, after a long struggle, by the British Parliament in 1807; and thirdly, in 1815, by Napoleon, when he returned from Elba, for the Bourbons had always rejected abolition as a revolutionary measure. From that time England has never ceased to negotiate against the exportation of negroes from their own country. At the time of my voyage (1862) Cuba alone imported slaves, and the Southerners were fighting for a great Slave Republic of which Cuba would probably have formed a state. But the issue of the war plainly showed that emancipation would soon reach that island in its turn, and the planters, assembling together, agreed to import no more slaves. Thus ended the European slave trade, not abolished by the squadron, as commonly asserted, but by the army of the Northern States. So long as slaves were in demand at Cuba, so

[1] The mediæval doctrine that the negroes were children of Ham, and that their black colour was owing to Noah's curse, is on a par with the legend of the negroes that white men are descended from Cain, who turned white when accused of murdering his brother. The curse was pronounced on Canaan, and the Canaanites were as white as the Romans and the Greeks.

long they would have been supplied. But the squadron was always of service, for, though powerless to destroy the slave trade, it certainly kept that traffic within bounds. It increased the risk of the venture, and thus, by raising the price of slaves, lessened the demand.

The attention of the British Government has recently been directed to the Oriental trade. Baker revealed the system of razzias above Gondokoro; and the Government of Egypt, once itself a slave-hunting power, is now taking measures to suppress these expeditions. The slave hunts of the Nyassa and Tanganyika regions have also been exposed by Livingstone, and the Zanzibar trade will soon be abolished, at least, in name. But the old proverb should always be remembered, 'As long as there are receivers there will be thieves.' It is impossible to blockade the East Coast, and the surest way to abolish the trade is to inspect the ports where the stolen men are received.

Finally, the caravans from Bornou to Fezzan should also be supervised, for this branch of the trade is inferior to none in its magnitude and horrors. The slaves, marching always on foot—not excepting the children and girls—are forced to traverse the Sahara, a journey so terrific that in every caravan a number of camels always die. Even the ships of the desert founder on this voyage, and the fate of the slaves is only too plainly to be read upon the way. The route is literally marked by skeletons, lying in postures of agony, and sometimes clasping each other with their fleshless arms: the

feet of the camels crunch on the bleached and brittle sculls, while the Arabs laugh and say, 'They are only black men; damn their fathers!'[1] However, this also will come to an end: the trade is contraband, and the appointment of a British Consul at Mourzuk (which is within the Turkish dominion) would probably secure the enforcement of the laws.

Let us now consider what have been the effects of slavery in Africa. With bush-people of the lowest type the women only are the slaves, and it will usually be found in such tribes or clans that they are muscular and ugly. Just as poor men select their domestic animals merely for use, so these people select their wives, not for beauty but for strength. The women are often forbidden in this period of history to decorate their bodies or to wear long hair.

Tribes of a higher standard domesticate their prisoners of war, and so slaves were originally called in Latin the 'spared' or 'preserved' (*servi*, from *servare*, to save). The women are now emancipated, are married for their beauty, and are allowed to pass their time in sedentary occupations. Long hair being universally admired, long-haired wives are selected by the chiefs; and thus, in the course of countless generations, a new species of woman is produced, and the delicate beauty of the sex thus indirectly proceeds from slavery.

In Africa itself this institution is not unkindly in its nature. The lord of the household is called Father by

[1] Denham and Clapperton, vol. i.

his slaves as well as by his sons: the home-born slaves are never sold; they always have property and often slaves of their own, frequently obtain their freedom, and sometimes inherit the fortunes of their masters. But when slaves are actively demanded, and fetch a high price for the foreign trade, no greater calamity can fall upon a country. The slave traders stir up wars between tribe and tribe: kid-napping is frequent; and false charges of crime are constantly made in order that the accused, with all his children and clients and slaves, may be sold. No man's liberty is safe, and no tribe is secure from war.

The countless caravans and dhow-loads of negroes which have been imported into Egypt and Asia have not produced, so far as we know, any historical results; but the slaves exported to America have profoundly influenced Civilization. The political history of the United States is the history of the negro slave. It is these men with black skins and woolly hair who created the planter aristocracy of the South, and occasioned that long series of parliamentary combats which culminated at last in a prodigious war. America commenced its career as a League of sovereign and independent States: it is owing to the negro that the League has already become a Nation.

The noble movement for the Abolition of the Slave Trade proceeded from an age already inspired by Voltaire and Rousseau to attack oppression wherever it existed. But this agitation, so strongly resisted in

England, and prolonged through so many years, undoubtedly reacted on the age which gave it birth. It widened European sympathies, and admitted naked savages within the brotherhood of man. The material development of England was also aided greatly by the slave trade. By means of negro labour sugar and tobacco were produced; by means of sugar and tobacco British commerce was increased; by means of increased commerce the arts of culture and refinement were developed. Again, in the present century a similar phenomenon may be observed. The rapid growth and unparalleled prosperity of Manchester are partly owing to the cotton supply of the Southern States, which could not have risen to its present state without the labour of the slave.

Thus then it appears that this iniquitous trade has indirectly been the means of making us wealthier, happier, and better men. And, if we study the past, we shall discover that such is Nature's ordinary method. She uses evil as the raw material of good; her aim is always noble, but her means are often base and cruel. The history of animated life is one continued development or progress. But when we study the laws by which the ascent of species has been achieved, we shrink with horror; we look again and again on the tear-stained, blood-stained pages of life, hoping that we have not read aright: for there we learn that animals have mounted in the scale on a ladder of corpses, that all live beings are at war, and that those which are the

most closely allied contend the most fiercely together. We learn that even the affections were originally weapons with which herd fought against herd, the victory falling to those which were most closely and lovingly united.

The origin of Man must always remain obscure; but we can dimly perceive that it must have been owing to misfortune. Imagine a herd of naked and almost hairless animals, neither swift in their movements nor provided with natural weapons of defence, existing at first under specially favoured conditions, and afterwards exposed to climatic changes, or attacks from other wild beasts. How then in this access of calamity, how in their struggle for existence, will they be able to preserve their lives? Only by close combination with its consequent development of the intelligence and the affections. This would naturally lead to frequent conversation, for without such intercourse there can be no concerted action, and hence a language of natural gestures and imitative sounds, and finally of conventional signs and sounds, will gradually grow into use, and the ape-period of history is over, and the human period begins.

And now, what is the meaning of these stones which men are grinding to a point? and these twigs which they form into a snare? and these logs which they hollow out to float upon the water? and these ores from which they are burning the metal? and these medicines which they extract from plants? and these trenches, and dykes, and complex machines which they construct to irrigate their fields? All these mean hunger and the

fear of death. The battle of life is still continued. Men are ever contending either with their fellow men or with the malignant forces of nature,—flood and tempest, pestilence and famine.

The necessities of life are satisfied; the fields are tilled with art; the wild animals have been domesticated; and men have only to labour, and they may live in plenty and peace. But no, this may not be allowed: the law of life is progress, and the law of progress is calamity and crime. Gaunt Hunger has been conquered, but now a dark and powerful spirit appears upon the scene, and instigates men to make war on one another. *Ambition* seizes the hardy mountaineers, they descend upon the fruitful lands, and degrade the people they have conquered into serfs. Thus empires, aristocracies, and caste systems are established. They in time grow aged and decay; new nations invade them; the Egyptians cede to the Persians, the Persians to the Greeks, the Greeks to the Romans, the Romans to the Arabs. But each of these conquering people gives an impulse to the world, each commences its reign with energies which create something new for mankind.

It is not, therefore, strange that the slave trade should have played a similar part in history to that already performed by famine and war. It is evident that Evil in the scheme of nature is not an excrescence, but part of the regular machinery; crime and misfortune are no less necessary for the growth of mankind than unpleasant weather for the growth of crops; and if we reside in

comfortable houses, and enjoy the luxuries of culture, it is because our predecessors led such miserable lives.

Many who read these pages will acknowledge that they owe their happiness of heart, or integrity of conscience, or even in some cases the fortunes they have made, to the afflictions of their earlier days. So if we regard mankind as a single unit—an Eternal One—and if we can imagine that One as an organised being, reviewing his past career, he would undoubtedly confess, that although Dame Nature had used him harshly in his childhood, and often made him suffer hunger and sickness, and left him to get food and find out medicines for himself, yet on the whole it has turned out for his good, and adversity has been his education. At the same time he would probably express a wish that Nature had selected some more agreeable and gentle method of developing his youthful mind.

However, it is some consolation to perceive that the good is gradually mastering the evil in this Manichæan world. Famine, pestilence, war, and slavery are fading from the scene; the nations are becoming better friends; and it may fairly be hoped that virtue will be finally triumphant, and happiness reign upon the earth.

THE CAPUCHIN OF THE CONGO

WE had been at sea about a month when the water around us became discoloured, and on lowering buckets we found that it was fresh, although we were far away from land. Then we knew that we were off the mouth of the Congo, the great river of the south coast.

Four hundred years ago, when this river was discovered, it flowed through a powerful kingdom, the ruler of which entered into alliance with the King of Portugal, sent ambassadors to Lisbon, and embraced the Christian faith. During more than two hundred years the Catholic missionaries laboured in the Congo. They covered the land with their chapels and convents, baptised thousands and thousands of the natives, subjected kings to their authority, exercised more than royal power, altered the fundamental laws, and even the domestic customs of the people, procured the banishment of the native priests, and prohibited all pagan practices under penalty of castigation with the scourge, public penance, or excommunication. This enormous power they obtained by means of supposed miracles and providential interpositions. When the Portuguese first entered the Congo country, they assisted the king in his wars, and their victories were ascribed to St. James, the Blessed Virgin, and a cavalry of angels. The Congo region is subject

to drought, and the fetishmen profess to bring down rain by means of incantations. The missionaries became their rivals, and their prayers were at first successful. But of necessity they often failed, and fell into disgrace, and the ancient religion was restored. Then the native priests would in their turn fail, an epidemic or invasion would afflict the land, sent, as it was supposed, by the white man's God, and again the Christians would be petitioned to return. Thus went on these missions with fluctuating success, till the power of the Portuguese upon the Congo declined. The city of San Salvador fell into ruins, the missionaries died off and were not replaced. Time has left few traces of their gigantic and honourable labours; for although scarcely less superstitious than the natives themselves, they were earnest and self-devoted men. But it is said that Jesus and Mary are still numbered with the Congo gods, that a rosary or Agnus Dei may often be found among the pagan amulets and charms, and that the women yet mark their foreheads with a cross.

The following letters will serve to exhibit the character of a missionary monk, and also to some extent the manners and customs of the Congoese.

Letter I.*

Rome.

I have obtained the permission of the superior to write to thee, my dearest sister. Art thou startled to see this letter dated from the convent of the Capuchins? or hast thou already heard from our family of the step

which I have taken? But in any case I will relate to thee myself what it was that made a gay and dissolute young man renounce the vanities of wealth and the world, and become a humble servant of the Lord.

I was in a tavern at midnight with the young Prince Colonna. A dispute arose between us—I will not tell thee its cause—and we fought by the light of torches. Maddened by rage and wine, we plunged our swords into each other. I was grievously wounded, and he was killed.

As I lay on a bed of sickness, and thought of death and judgment, and of the soul I had despatched in the midst of impurity, unshriven, unforgiven, before the most terrible of all tribunals—ah, me! I cried, what guilt is mine! At night I saw fearful images, and hell-fire seemed before me.

And after I had passed through much agony and pain, and all thought that I was dying, the last sacraments were administered unto me, and this gracious ceremony seemed to bring me peace. That same night the Blessed Virgin came to my bed-side, and bade me repent of my sins, and do penance that I might be forgiven. In the morning I sent for my confessor, who advised me to vow myself to the service of the church and to enter a religious order. This then I pledged myself to do, if I should recover from my wound, and from that time, as if by a miracle, my sickness began to pass away; the fever no more returned; a divine calm took possession of my being. I heard sweet voices in

the night; I saw the features of the blessed. In a few weeks my health was restored, and behold the scar which the wound had left was in the image of a cross!

Then I summoned the lawyers and bequeathed my fortune to my brother. I called my servants and bade them adieu. I laid aside my robes of velvet and gold; I forsook the marble palace of my fathers, and clothing myself in a grey garment with a cord about my waist, I entered this cell from which now I write to thee. O, pious and beloved sister! dost thou remember the days of our childhood, those innocent and happy days? Dost thou remember how in the purple autumn we wandered through the vineyards, or dipped our bare feet in the flowing river, and dried them with the long green grass? Dost thou remember how we knelt down side by side in the little country church upon the hill behind the villa. It was from thee I learnt to pray to the Virgin, and to bow myself before her shrine. It was by thee my heart was trained to turn towards its Maker, whom afterwards I deserted and betrayed. Yet often, in the midst of blasphemy and sin, my thoughts reverted to those blessed days; and often, dearest Angiola, when I received thy letters overflowing with a sister's love, I resolved to renounce my abominable life. I gave up reading Machiavelli and Lucretius; I shunned the society of those with whom I had been wont to jest on sacred things; I attended complines and vespers—but in vain. The most beautiful and touching passages in the Imitation of à Kempis, or the Introduction to a Holy Life, or the

Confessions of St. Augustine, the Psalms of David, the Divine Story of the Passion, were read by me without emotion. A demon of doubt domineered me; I cavilled and criticised; I could not believe: and so I returned to those horrible haunts where, calling one another by classical names, we offered sacrifices to a bust of Epicurus, and travestied before a Venus the adoration of the Virgin.

O blessed sorrow! nay, even I will say, O blessed sin!—*O beata culpa!*—which has thus saved me from eternal wrath. For now I am again as a little child; I doubt no more; the divine mysteries which perplex the narrow-minded votaries of reason are now by faith made manifest unto me. My whole life is one sweet and powerful emotion; the sight of the crucifix upon the wall; the voices and footsteps of the brethren; the grey calm cloisters; the solemn tolling of the bell, fill me with delicious rapture. This cell is to me a celestial abode, where I think only of divine things, and where I dwell by faith in the presence of my Saviour, until the hour cometh when He shall take me to Himself in verity and truth. May His providence ever attend thee, my sweetest Angiola, and preserve thee from trial and temptation. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

LETTER II.

Lisbon.

The letter which I wrote thee I gave to the Superior. Having read it, he said it should be sent; but I saw that

his face was clouded, and that he looked anxiously upon me. The next day he called me to him, and bade me beware of spiritual pride, which was one of Satan's most successful snares. ' He reminded me that I had passed years in sin, and as yet only a few brief months in piety and faith. He ended his admonitions by tenderly embracing me, and bidding me be of good heart, but yet to be ever on the watch against myself. I thanked him heartfully and humbly for his counsel, and prayed to God that He would illuminate me with His wisdom, and teach me to understand my own frail heart. That same night, as I lay upon my bed, a shadow darker than the darkness passed across the cell, and I heard a terrible voice, which cried, '*O self-deceiving and complacent fool! Is this a life of pain and penance thou art leading?*' Then for many days I fasted and scourged myself and prayed. But no consolation came upon my soul. I went to the hospitals, and attended those who were afflicted with loathsome and contagious diseases; I suffered the jeers and gibings of my former friends as they passed me in the streets. But all these things were light and easy, and I felt that I was not doing penance. I implored the Superior to find me some work to do, which might try me more severely. He replied that the Pope had received envoys from the ruler of Congo, a country on the Guinea coast, praying that missionaries might be sent to his kingdom. The Pope proposed to send out some Capuchins, and I might, if I pleased, be among the number. But the

Congo, he said, was a terrible land, from which it was seldom any one returned. The climate was deadly, and the nations treacherous. Had I sufficient courage to spend my dearest blood for the Saviour's sake, and to endure with patience the many sufferings I should be forced to undergo? I answered that, with God's assistance, I would try. He then applied to the Sacred College, and procured me my commission. Shortly afterwards I embarked at Civita Vecchia, with two other brethren of the order, on a vessel bound for this port of Lisbon. To-morrow we sail in another ship for San Paolo de Loanda.

And now farewell, beloved Europe! Farewell, my countrymen; and thou, my Angiola. Never more, never more shall I see thee on earth again. I go to the wilderness to expiate my sins, to seek for the sheep that are lost, and to bring them to God as a ransom for my soul—my poor guilty soul—condemned eternally to die. Pray for me, Angiola, and also for him whom I have slain.

LETTER III.

San Paolo de Loanda.

Since I wrote to thee last, dear sister, we have made a great voyage. At first we met with evil winds, and were driven back into the Tagus; but afterwards the weather became fair. We sailed rapidly past Madeira and the Peak of Teneriffe, celebrated by the ancients; we entered the tropics, where the sky and sea of a delicious blue—the glorious sunsets—the beautiful birds that

floated round us on wings that were never weary, or which seemed to walk, like St. Peter, on the sea—the flying fish, sparkling in the air—the huge fountain-spouting monsters of the deep—all these, with many other wonders, excited our astonishment, and filled us with reverence for the works of the Creator.

Every morning we sang the Rosary, and in the evening the Litany. On holidays we preached a sermon. The ship was dedicated to our Saviour, the Blessed Virgin, and St. Joseph, which made us celebrate the Holy Nativity with more than the usual solemnity. The merchants not only adorned the altars with the richest things they had, but likewise hung the outside of our ship with several carpets and rich clothing, the air being at that time serene, and the sea calm.

We arrived safely in Loanda, which is one of the finest harbours I have ever seen. The bishop met us on the quay, near to which is a marble throne, whereon he sits when the ships are being laden, and blesses the slaves, one by one, as they pass to go over to Brazil. We went to the cathedral, a great building, where the fathers sang Te Deum for our safe arrival. In a few days I depart for San Salvador, upon the Congo. How my heart bounds with joy, not unmixed with melancholy, when I think of the souls which, by God's grace, I may rescue from the demons whom they worship, and with whom, if they enter not the Church, they will be condemned to torments everlasting!

And thou wilt enquire, How is it with myself? Alas!

Angiola, it is not always well. I have had on board the ship many hours of ecstasy and transport. Three days I passed without touching meat or drink, wrapped in contemplation on the Trinity. But at times I have suffered from a spiritual dryness; and often, like the blessed Augustine, I am tormented by the memory of past pleasures; and sometimes, in the night, I am subject to a marvellous and fearful vision. I awake from sleep with a sensation of extraordinary cold; my body becomes rigid; I feel my wound open, and my blood stream forth; the clock strikes twelve; torches flash around me; I hear the clinking of swords; and before me passes the Colonna, his features distorted with anguish, and his pale arm stretched towards me. Every day I repeat a mass for his soul, and pray that he may be released from his torments. But ah! dearest sister, often I fear that his guilty spirit is buried in the pit from which there is no escape. And then, what have I done? I have murdered his soul. I have robbed him of eternal life. Yes, verily, I see it is only by preaching the Gospel to the heathen, by saving others from hell-fire, that I can expiate this fatal and superhuman crime.

Letter IV.

San Salvador.

I have journeyed in a litter from Loanda to this town, which is the capital of the Congo and the residence of its kings. We travelled slowly, and were two months upon the road. Every night we halted at a libatte or village, where the people brought me beans

and millet. My poor body soon began to feel the want of bread and wine. I became weak, and then the fever fell upon me. In such cases the Portuguese of Angola always bleed themselves abundantly, and indeed they maintain that no man can have health in this climate until he has lost his European blood, and his veins have been replenished with new blood from the country food. I therefore called a native, one of my people, who was accustomed to the use of the lancet, and he took a large dishful from me, which he said would be sufficient to begin with. On arriving at the convent in this town the brethren applauded my treatment, and said that thus only had their lives been saved. But indeed scarcely they seem to be alive: their voices are weak and broken, and they look as if they had been dug from their graves.

San Salvador contains many hundred houses: the king's palace is a league round. There are three churches and a convent. In one of the churches is a statue of the Virgin Mary, which is worshipped every Sunday by thousands of negroes from the neighbouring towns.

Yesterday I was taken to the king. He sat upon an ivory throne, and was dressed entirely in scarlet, with a plume of feathers in his hat and a rapier at his side. The brethren informed him I should presently go as missionary to the province of Sundi, which belongs to his kingdom, and is governed by a count. Brother Alphonso had resided there a twelvemonth, but had

died a few weeks ago. The king offered me his hand, and thanked me for coming to his country, and promised that one of his nobles should escort me to Sundi as soon as I was ready to depart.

LETTER V.

Sundi.

Many months have passed since I wrote to thee, my Angiola, and now I am deep in the wilderness, and it is but seldom I can find an opportunity of communicating with the world. Sundi is the frontier province of the Congo Empire. Its ruler or Count, as the Portuguese call him, is in name a vassal of the king, and sends him as tribute every year a hundred slaves; but he receives in return rich presents of European cloth, and is in reality an independent prince. Beyond Sundi, towards the east and the north, is a wild desolate region inhabited by squalid tribes, and often devastated by the Giaghas, who are the Huns of Africa, and whose invasions are dreaded by the Congoese, and especially by the natives of this province, which must first bear the brunt of their attacks. But the people say that so long as I am with them they have nought to fear. They know that my prayers will protect them, and that God will have mercy on His children. Edifying is indeed the faith of these poor people, who are now brought into the fold; for I have been permitted to complete the work of my noble predecessor, and to extinguish those errors which he also would doubtless have conquered had he lived.

Ah, dearest sister! how can I describe the feelings which entered my bosom when first they led me to the hut which he had built. It consisted of one room: a crucifix was on the wall; a bamboo settle covered with a skin was his bed; a large chest raised upon logs served him as a table, and on this was a palm-oil lamp made of clay, resembling those which the pilgrims bring home from the Holy Land. Such was his simple furniture and such is mine. I have altered or added nothing. I have enquired of this good man's life, and endeavour to imitate his actions. He rose at daybreak, and worked in the garden, where he had planted some vines and fruit trees and herbs from Europe: the rest of the day he passed without remission in teaching the children, visiting the people in their homes, and celebrating the offices in the little wooden chapel which the natives had built at his request.

I ascertained on my arrival that many pagan practices still survived among the people. They hung amulets and charms on the fences round their fields to preserve them from robbers and wild beasts. Certain rites were observed at the birth and weaning of children, and in the burial of the dead. I conferred with the Count, and persuaded him to pass a law that those who offended in such a manner should be flogged, and, in case of repetition, deprived of their property, and banished from the kingdom. The Count's people were animated with zeal on behalf of the faith, and brought me many persons, especially women, whom they found

wearing secretly beneath their aprons fetishes composed of horns, feathers, and other abominations. I flogged them with the cord of my order, and sent them away weeping and repentant, with rosaries and images of the Agnus Dei, which they promised me always to wear. I also gave the people consecrated palms to hang upon their fences instead of the charms. But, alas! how hard it is to turn these poor benighted creatures from the worship of the Evil One. One evening as I was walking in the grove near the town, wrapped in godly meditation, I heard the beating of a drum in the thickest part of the wood, and creeping through the bushes as softly as I could, discovered a clean-swept place, and a multitude of men and women dancing round a great tree, at the foot of which a fire was lighted, and a sheep bound ready for the sacrifice. Among them was the Count himself. The next day I summoned all the people to the church. Having gone there before them, I placed an image of the Virgin, covered, on the altar, with a blood-smeared dagger in its breast. I then told the people that by their impious conduct they not only offended their loving Saviour, but also did great evil to His Immaculate Mother. At the same time I uncovered the image, and they, seeing it so wounded and bloody, began to lament and cry. I ordered the Count to stand forth in the middle of the church, and to flog himself before the people while I was saying mass. The next evening I heard a doleful sound: it was the people, who sang

the 'Salve Regina,' and were doing penance of their own accord. I went into the chapel, and prepared the altar. They came, bearing huge logs of wood upon their shoulders. I then put out the lights, and they flogged themselves for many hours with fibrous cords and scourges of bark.

I believed that the faith was firmly established, and my heart abounded with joy; but still another trial was at hand, another battle to be fought, as if to proclaim more loudly to the heathen that God is the Lord, and that there are no other gods but He. There fell a fierce drought upon the country; the sky was of brass and the land iron. Then came into the town a man with painted face and plumes upon his brow, and the people ran to welcome him, and knelt down before him, saying, 'O master, give us rain, give us rain!' I went to the palace and enquired who this man might be. The Count replied that he was called the Shepherd of the Clouds. He dwelt in a distant land, and journeyed from town to town, followed by the clouds, which came to his call, and rained at his command. Then I said such power belonged by right to God alone and to his servants; and that it was evil to purchase the blessings of this life from the demons, for thus they obtained possession of human souls. I ordered that the magician should be sent away; but the Count shrugged his shoulders, and replied it was not in his power to grant my request. If he commanded the people to send away this man who had so often given them rain

they would not obey him, for they feared the drought, which brought famine and pestilence and death. I therefore closed the chapel and returned to my hut. During seven days I remained within, praying to God that He would not suffer the rain to descend. During all that time I heard, day and night, the singing of voices and the beating of drums. But no rain fell. Then the Count and the elders came and beseeched me to pray for rain. I ordered a procession to the chapel, and offered up prayers before the people. Immediately the sky was covered with clouds, and the rain abundantly poured down. The people brought me the magician bound hand and foot with cords. I ordered him to be taken to the Congo and embarked on the ships for Brazil; but he escaped upon the road, assisted by Satan, who could protect him on earth, but who will not be able to save him from the wrath to come.

Thus then, my Angiola, the province of Sundi has been converted to the Christian faith. No signs of the ancient worship are anywhere to be seen. The children are taught to repeat the Ave Maria and Paternoster, every day. The people sing the Rosary as they labour in the fields, now flourishing and green. Their year is a sabbath, their life is a prayer, the Lord reigneth among them as a king. Rejoice with me, beloved sister, rejoice with me, that I have saved these wandering souls, and have made atonement for my sins!

Often I suffer from the sickness of the country, but

I am not afflicted, for my heart is at rest. Nay, the danger to which I am exposed, my labours and privations, are the inexhaustible springs of spiritual joys. I remember not ever to have enjoyed such interior delights, and these consolations of the soul are so exquisite, so constant, and so pure, that they take from me all sense of my corporeal sufferings, and exalt me to an ecstasy of beatitude and bliss.

LETTER VI.

Sundi.

I sit down to write this, my beloved, at a strange and critical time, but messengers are being sent to San Salvador, and I wish not to lose the opportunity. Moreover, who can tell what may happen in the next few days? The Giaghas are upon us. They have already destroyed a village on the frontier, and to night our army marches forth against them.

On such occasions as these, in the olden days, the sorcerers and priests were wont to deliver oracles, to wash and paint the bodies of the warriors, and to sell them amulets and charms. But now they came to me, the servant of the Lord. The Giaghas demanded a thousand cattle and five hundred slaves; if these should be paid, they swore by the ghosts of their fathers and their mothers' tears that they would pass in peace. Should Sundi accept these terms, or try the event of war? I bade them wait till the morrow, and I would give them a reply. Having prayed all

the night, I fell into a trance, and heard a voice which said, '*Let them fight in My name and they shall conquer.*' Then in the morning I said that God commanded them to fight, and promised them the victory. At once the great drum was beaten: messengers were despatched to the villages and the plantations: in two days the army was collected in the town; each company beneath its captain, with its banner and its drum. These banners I blessed in the church, and also the drums, having first removed the sculls and jawbones with which they were encircled. I gave holy water to the soldiers one by one. Great is their faith, my Angiola; already their features are elate with triumph, already they sing the songs of victory and joy.

It was the custom of the fetishmen to go in front of the army, as do those of the Giaghas likewise. This duty, therefore, devolves also upon me. The warriors on either side never attack the priests for fear that the gods should avenge themselves on those by whom their favourites are slain. If it happens that one is killed by a stray arrow or spear, propitiatory sacrifices are offered up. I have, therefore, little to fear from the weapons of the Giaghas; calm, then, thy anxiety, my Angiola, nor dread the issue of the battle-day. Hath not the Lord spoken? and will He permit His enemies to conquer? He will scatter their armies like dust before the wind; the demons shall be humbled and know that He is God.

Letter VII.

Sundi.

The Giaghas have routed us in battle; their watch-fires encircle the town. Our cattle they have taken, and destroyed our crops. They demand a thousand women and children as the price of peace. Each family must surrender not only its slaves, but its own flesh and blood, for thus only can they save the town from flames, and their bodies from destruction. I send this letter by my catechist, who returns to San Salvador at once. He alone remains in the Catholic faith; the others have abjured.

Letter VIII.

Sundi.

The tribute has been paid; the Giaghas have departed, and the town is left bare and bereaved. The people come to me and say, 'O deceiver! where is now thy God? Where is the woman that thou badest us to worship? Where is that Jesus whom thou didst call the Saviour? Could He save us from the Giaghas?'

* * * * * * * *

The King of Congo has sent to order or request that my life shall be spared, because he fears the Portuguese. The magicians have returned; the church is destroyed; the people bring me no food; I go into the woods for berries and roots. The women cry to me as I pass, 'Give us back our men whom the Giaghas have slaughtered! Give us back our children they have taken!'

* * * * * * * *

I know not, Angiola, whether these fragments that I write will ever come within thy hands. It would perhaps be well if they did not, for they will trouble thee with sorrow and shame; yet I have so often vaunted myself before thee I may not conceal my guilt. As I sat one evening in my hut and listened to the cries of the people, who were calling on the demons to return and dwell again within the town, I reflected with sadness on the punishment they would receive in the future life because of their idolatry. And then some evil spirit whispered in my ear, '*What have these poor savages done that they should suffer eternal pain? Didst thou not deceive them and thyself as well? That voice thou didst hear was a chimera, the audible expression of thy inmost thoughts. These people with their demons and thou with thy God are but as one. The events of life are not to be swayed by the words or gestures of man, but are due to a fixed and all-pervading law.*'

I lighted my lamp and attempted to read, but found myself reciting some verses from Lucretius. I began to transcribe the seven Penitential Psalms, but wrote down instead some speculations on the existence of the Deity. At length I threw off all restraint, and abandoned myself to my thoughts. I recalled the memory of past pleasures: I sang, I danced, I shouted blasphemies; I acted as if at an orgie, saluting my friends by their names, and bidding them welcome to the feast. I drank from an invisible goblet, and embraced imaginary forms.

The next morning my doubts flew away as phantoms.

I recovered my senses, and was seized with remorse. For many days past I have been unable to read or write. Fain would I confess my sins, and do penance, that I might be absolved. But no priest is here; I am cut off from the mercy-seat of God. I cannot return to San Salvador, my body is exhausted. I am afraid to sleep, for fearful visions afflict me in the night; I see my father and mother weeping over me. Even when I am awake I hear strange noises, sometimes sighs and groans, at other times mingled with the sound of stifled laughter. Hands pluck me by the sleeve; often I take a light and search for these persecutors of my sleeping and waking hours. My life is anguish and torment; my prayers seem to bring me no relief; often and often I lift up my hands and cry, 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?'

* * * * * * * *

Alas! it was I who forsook Him. I see it all clearly now; the disaster of the Giaghas was sent to try my faith. O miserable man, I have failed, and am for ever lost!

The people have deserted the town, for their priests have told them that the ground is accursed. They have left me here alone to die.

I can no longer crawl to the forest for the roots and berries on which I subsist. The fever will soon come upon me again. I go now to lie upon that bed, knowing I shall never rise from it again. I place the ink and

paper by my side. My last words, Angiola, shall be thine. 'Of thy charity pray for me.'

* * * * * * * *

It is night, and the hour is at hand; I feel it coming. I am cold; I see the torches; the swords are clinking; my blood flows, my body stiffens—I faint, I die. Before me passes the Colonna, striding like a wild beast to and fro. '*Thou hast sinned*,' *he cries*, '*and hast not been absolved. Unshriven, unforgiven, to-morrow thy soul shall be as mine.*'

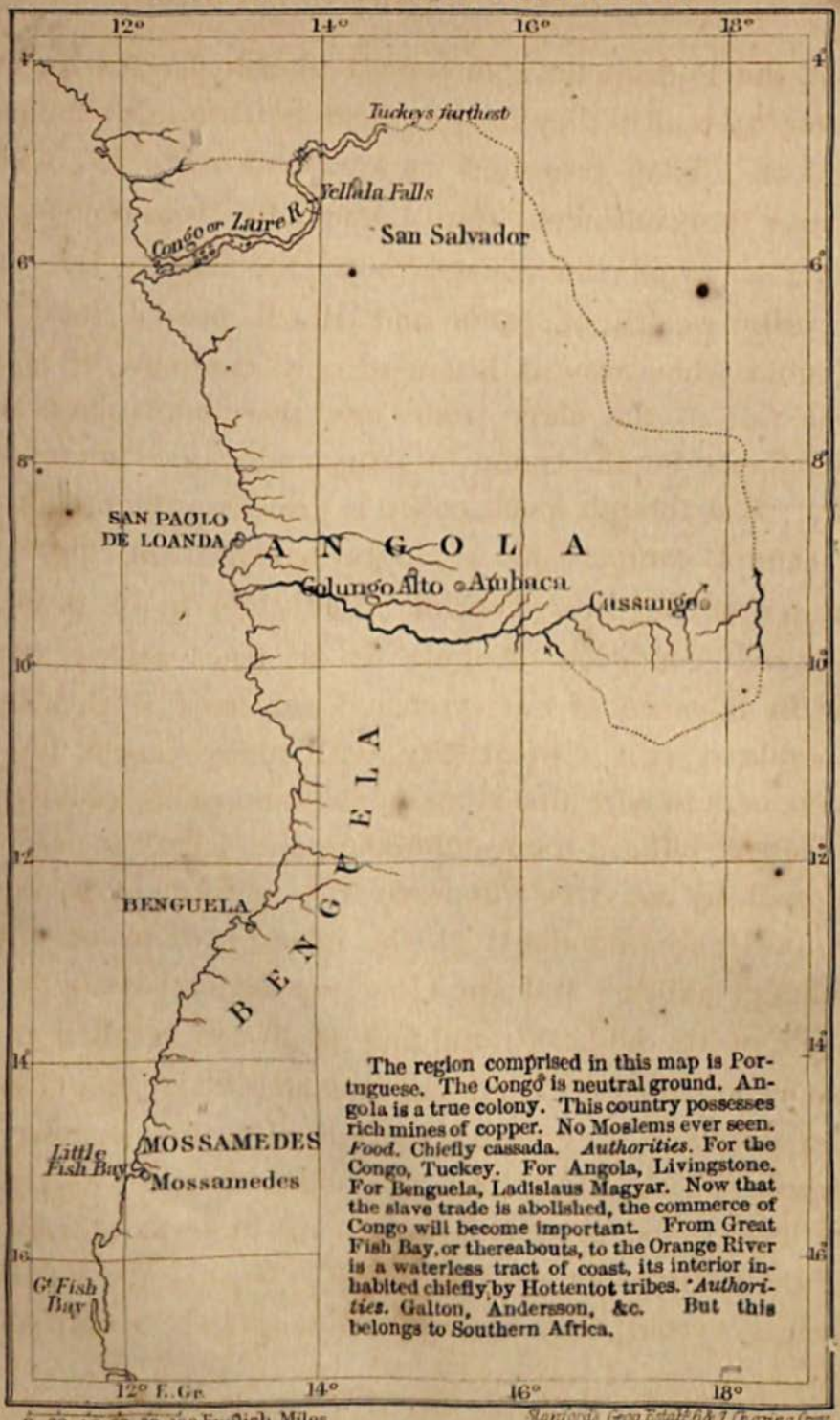
THE RUINS OF THE PORTUGUESE

OUR ingenious navigators contrived to pass Loanda a matter of forty miles; however, we quickly returned with a fair wind. A black pilot came on board, and took us into the harbour, which is spacious and secure, and is formed by an island lying opposite the town. This island was once famous for the cowries it produced, which shells were formerly current as coins in the countries of the Congo. It is now inhabited by fishermen, and is a pleasure-garden for the citizens, who light it up on their fête days, and thither resort for music and dancing, coffee and orgeade.

The possessions of the Portuguese are extensive, stretching along the coast to the Congo, on one side, and on the other to Mossamedes, near Little Fish Bay, on the borders of the waterless tract, which thence extends to the Cape of Good Hope. The eastern limit of the province is Cassange, three hundred miles from the sea.

In the sixteenth century San Paolo de Loanda was one of the finest seaports in the world. It has declined, as Lisbon has declined. The college of the Jesuits is a workshop; and oxen feed within the old cathedral. At

PORTUGUESE AFRICA.



The region comprised in this map is Portuguese. The Congo is neutral ground. Angola is a true colony. This country possesses rich mines of copper. No Moslems ever seen. *Food.* Chiefly cassada. *Authorities.* For the Congo, Tuckey. For Angola, Livingstone. For Benguela, Ladislaus Magyar. Now that the slave trade is abolished, the commerce of Congo will become important. From Great Fish Bay, or thereabouts, to the Orange River is a waterless tract of coast, its interior inhabited chiefly by Hottentot tribes. *Authorities.* Galton, Andersson, &c. But this belongs to Southern Africa.

Stanford's Geog.l Estab.t 6 & 7 Charing Cross.

London: Smith, Elder & Cº

first, the Portuguese commenced to colonise Angola on a mighty scale; they fought great battles and subdued nations. They projected an overland route to India, across the continent, from Loanda to Mozambique, in order to avoid the voyage round the Cape.[1] But the superior wealth of India and Brazil proved fatal to Angola, which was at last used only as a mine of men. The fall of the slave trade has, therefore, ruined the merchants, for the traffic in ivory and wax is unimportant; and though much coffee is grown in the province, it cannot compete as a plantation with the gigantic estates of the New World. Yet even in its present decayed condition Angola is a true colony, and far in advance of our wretched sea-coast settlements. Loanda is still a great city, with many vessels in its harbour, and with fine stone houses and public buildings, cafés and billiard-rooms, churches and jails. It is garrisoned by convicts, who wear the uniform of soldiers, while the commandants of the inland stations are often political exiles. But the Governor-General is always a noble of the highest rank, and is always recalled in a few years, lest he should become ambitious for a crown, and proclaim Angola an empire, after the manner of Brazil. In the olden days the colonists were sometimes inclined to be rebellious, but never thought of casting off their allegiance to the crown. If they did not like their governor, they requested the king to recall him;

[1] Gamitto, 'O Muata Cazembe,' p. 48.

and if the king declined to do so, they put him on board a ship, and sent him home. When the new governor came out, they would not let him land unless he had brought with him a general amnesty for all offences.[1]

The anchor went into the sea with a splash; the cable rumbled through the hawse-hole; my days on the 'Emilia' were ended. But the joy I felt on my arrival was somewhat damped by the reflection that I only possessed three and sixpence, and that there was only one Englishman residing in the town. If he happened to be absent, my position would not be delightful. However, I learnt, when the agents came on board, that the Senhor Gabriel was at home. He was the British Consul and Commissioner of the slave trade; and, at all events, I was sure of eatables and drinkables, and a forecastle passage somewhere or other as a distressed British subject. But the high praise which Dr. Livingstone had bestowed upon this gentleman, beneath whose roof he had lived for seven months, and whom he called 'his good angel of Loanda,' made me hope he would assist me; and I expected to find some letters at his house which might serve me as credentials in a pecuniary way.

The captain of the 'Emilia' apparently understood my position, for he called me aside, and said that if I could not get lodgings on shore to my fancy, I must come and stay with him on board, and he would give me better dinners than we had upon the voyage. 'Promise me to come,' said he; 'as my friend, you under-

[1] Merolla.

stand, as my friend.' I have had a kindly feeling for slave traders ever since.

As soon as I landed on the quay, I was surrounded by the bearers of palanquins. Being despondent and economical, I said that I would walk; but some Portuguese gentlemen who were present would not hear of such a thing. They called a couple of bearers; I crawled with some difficulty on to a hanging board covered with a carpet, a pillow at the end, and curtains at the sides; and off went my men at a jog-trot, while I, with a moody air, turned over my three and sixpence in my pocket, and wondered how long it would last.

Mr. Gabriel was out. The secretary asked me what was my business. I said it was nothing particular (!), and mentioned my name and occupation. He then informed me that some letters had come for me; but having seen my return to England erroneously announced in one of the papers, he had sent them back to Fernando Po. Alas, for my credentials! At this moment Mr. Gabriel returned, and at once told me to make my house his home. A few days afterwards, I mentioned the state of my finances, and, without hesitation, he cashed my bill for a hundred pounds, which I spent on a journey to Ambaka, an inland station, a hundred and fifty miles from the coast.

To me, an amateur of exploration, this little journey had a peculiar interest and charm. No Englishman had been over this road but Dr. Livingstone and myself. Wherever I went the planters discoursed with upraised

eyes and hands of that wonderful man who came in upon them from the dark deep heart of Africa, riding on an ox. All of them had some little anecdote to tell, and at Golungo Alto the commandant showed me the latitude and longitude which the Doctor had marked with a red-hot poker on the floor.

The palanquin is too elegant a conveyance for a journey of this kind, and the hammock is used in its stead. I hired a number of bearers, and made a stray Swiss, who was out of employ and could speak Portuguese, my headman and interpreter. He also was accommodated with a hammock. I paid my expenses with copper coins, filling two large bags, the weight of which caused many a remonstrance from the bearers. However, I consoled them with the assurance that the bags would grow lighter every day, as indeed they did with wonderful rapidity.

The men shuffled swiftly over the road, the hammock creaking like a saddle, and as they went along the leader flourished a stick in his hand with the gestures of a bandmaster and sang, the others joining in the chorus :—

Shove him on!
But is he a good man?
No, I think he's a stingy fellow.
Shove him on!
Let him drop in the road then.
No, he has a big stick.
Shove him on!
Oh, matar-bicho, matar-bicho!
Who will give me matar-bicho?

Matar-bicho, in the Angolese patois, means kill-worm, the natives supposing that their entrails are tormented by a small worm which it is necessary to destroy with raw spirits. From the frequency of their demands, it would seem that this is the worm that ever gnaws, and that their thirst is the fire that is never quenched.

We journeyed through a beautiful country unlike anything I had seen on this continent before. Most people seem to think that because Africa is hot and large the scenery must be magnificent; but I have usually found it monotonous and tame. The dismal forests of the Gaboon have no variety or life, and in North-Western Africa one travels over interminable plains covered with short and stunted trees. But Angola possesses mountainous districts, which reminded Livingstone of the Highlands, and my Swiss of the minor Alps; the air is elastic and bright. Often as we gained the summit of a hill we saw before us a valley covered with maize fields and plantations of coffee and cocoa, with white houses glimmering among the trees; and we passed neat cottages of stone which were closed throughout the day, as they are in England at harvest time—men, women, and children being all at work in the fields. Some of the rivers were completely dry, their course being marked by pebbles and shining quartz; but others flashed across our path—bands of silver edged with green; and sometimes we saw a boat filled with oranges, in heaps of gleaming gold, floating down towards the sea. We usually passed the night at a fort or a plantation,

but in the desert regions we halted at the government caravanserais, rude buildings of clay with three compartments, each containing a wooden bed, with a bill of regulations posted on the wall. In these establishments a policeman is stationed, whose duty it is to have fire and water always ready, and from the ceiling hangs the fruit of the baobab, the glutinous pith of which is used as sealing-wax by the Angolese. Sometimes these places were infested by rats, and then I preferred to sleep in the open air. The high grass of the plains made us excellent straw beds.

I visited this colony at an unpropitious time. The Portuguese were at war with the natives of the frontier, and their officers scoured the country, seizing cattle and provisions, and dragging men in irons to the seat of war. The peasants often fled at my approach, supposing that I was one of their oppressors. As for the planters and officials, they were not less firmly convinced that I was sent to inspect and report upon the colony previous to its seizure or purchase by Great Britain. That we should take their country seemed to them a very natural proceeding, and quite in accordance with the history of the past; all that they desired was that they should receive compensation for their slaves. At first, of course, I assured them they were entirely mistaken; I had nothing whatever to do with the Government; 'Palmerston' did not even know of my existence, and I was travelling merely for my pleasure. These replies were very ill received; in one house the mosquito curtains

were privately abstracted from my bed before I retired for the night, and my Swiss assured me that, if I did not mend my ways, I ran a good chance of being poisoned. I accordingly adopted a formula, which satisfied my conscience and gave intense satisfaction to my hosts. 'Senhor so-and-so,' I would say, 'I give you my word that I am not sent by the Government, and that the English have no desire for Angola.' Here Senhor so-and-so would nod and wave his hand, much as to say, 'I understand; private mission; instructions, &c.' '*But*,' I continued, 'I can safely promise you this, that if our Government takes Angola (mind, I say it won't, but if it does), every planter shall receive the full value of his slaves; and, if my humble opinion is taken on the matter (I don't think it will be, but still if it is), *your* interests, my dear and honoured friend, shall not be neglected.' Here I would look at the Senhor in a very knowing manner, his face would become radiant, and he would be happy for the rest of his days; whereas, if I had told him nothing but the truth, he would have lived in a continual state of anxiety and alarm.

The reader will, no doubt, smile at the allusion to the poisoning, and certainly I had no fears on that account. But poisoning must be common in Angola, for it is the stock subject of conversation, as the weather is in England, and fever at Sierra Leone. I will relate one instance out of several which happened upon this journey. I was at breakfast with a planter in Angola. The Swiss and I drank the coffee of the country.

which is raised from Mocha-berries imported by the Jesuits. The Angolese prefer to drink stale, musty tea, which a British washerwoman would not touch. When our host perceived that we alone were drinking coffee, he said to one of his poor relations, 'Make haste, Antonio, finish your tea, and then take a cup of coffee, so that if the Englishman gets poisoned on the road, he will know it was not here.'

At Ambaka I bought an ox, and rode home on it part of the way. When these hard-mouthed animals are broken in, a stick of peculiar shape is passed through the nose, and the bridle reins fastened to each end. Owing to the looseness of the creature's skin, the rider rocks to and fro, unless the saddle be very tightly girthed. It is also placed well forward on the shoulders, so that when the ox backs you feel as if you were going to slip over his head. However, the *bœuf-cheval* is a capital beast for a long journey. He is slow, but hardy and patient, goes over rough ground better than a horse, and will leap well if you give him time.[1]

As for my other beasts of burden, the bearers, they had troubled us sadly by the way. I had been obliged to pay them a sum of money in advance, and so long as they remained in my debt I dared not offend them, knowing they would run away, if they had only the

[1] The Portuguese discoverers found the natives of South Africa riding upon oxen; and Kolben tells an extraordinary tale about Hottentot oxen being used in war like the dog regiments of the ancient Persians. Before the introduction of the camel, pack oxen were employed, according to Barth, for the transport of goods and produce across the Sahara.

By Ox and Hammock.

shade of an excuse. So during the first two weeks or so they did precisely as they pleased; if they came to a wayside tavern, where dried meat and palm wine were exposed for sale, they stopped without asking my permission, and enjoyed a feast while I sat brooding in the sun. They were often impertinent, and, in fact, behaved just as schoolboys would behave to the master, if they knew that he could not punish them in any way. But Time the Avenger marched on; the money I advanced was spent, and at length my Swiss brought me the welcome tidings that I owed them each about three half-pence. There now was no fear of their deserting; they would never leave their debtor, but would cling to him through danger and ill-usage with unchangeable fidelity. We therefore arranged that, as soon as an opportunity occurred, we would pay them out for their previous offences. A keen sense of justice suggested this proceeding, but I must own that the idea of thrashing a creditor was not altogether without its charm. We had not to wait very long. One morning I told the men that I would stay to breakfast with the commandant of the station where we had passed the night, and that after breakfast they must be ready with the hammock. The men idled about as usual till I was ready to go, and then began to cook their morning meal. Having waited a considerable time, we went to look after our attendants, and found them seated in a circle, eating their breakfast in the slow and genteel manner of the Africans. The Swiss approached them

stealthily with upraised stick, and laid into them right and left. Never did sweeter music greet my ears than the whacks of the cudgel, and the cries of the men, and the rattling of the gourds overturned. From that time I had nothing to complain of, at least when my major-domo was at hand. But to me they showed no deference whatever; and this, the Swiss explained, was on account of my inveterate mildness. He had more than once assured them that beneath my gentle demeanour was concealed a ferocious and blood-thirsty disposition, but they would not believe him, and he assured me that if I persisted in my meekness, we should never be able to get on. I bore his advice in mind; and one day, the men in the hammock having bumped me against a rock, and then burst into an impudent laugh, I jumped out of my hammock, with rage in all my limbs, kicked them first, thrashed them afterwards, and then returned to the hammock, which they held ready for me with many obsequious bows and deferential smiles. After this little incident I was loved and honoured by my people, and never chastised them again. So long as they supposed that I had not got it in me to give them a flogging, they set me down as a poor creature; but when they knew that I could do so and spared them, they felt gratitude to me for my forbearance. These bearers, it must be understood, were little better than slaves; they had the intellects of children, and corporal punishment caused them no shame. But with Africans of a higher type it would be useless and dangerous

to inflict a blow. A friend of mine once struck his interpreter, who looked at him calmly and said, '*Gentleman* no do that, Mr. ——.'

In travelling through this province of Angola I was surprised to find how many hundreds of the negroes could read and write in Portuguese. The roads were well-ordered, and patrolled by a rural police. The forts were numerous. Everything showed that here the experiment of colonisation had once been tried on a gigantic scale. I looked with interest upon the ruins of convents, covered with roses and embowered in foreign trees, and my thoughts recurred to the Portuguese of old. Our sailors still preserve in their traditions the exploits of those sea-pioneers; and should not we, who have our histories before us, touch with a gentle hand the condition of a fallen people, and gratefully recall the service they have rendered to mankind? In the genealogy of intellect and enterprise they must be enrolled among our ancestors; we have inherited their possessions and virtues. Let us, therefore, commemorate their glories as if they were our own.

In the beginning of the fifteenth century a solitary castle stood near Cape St. Vincent, on a bleak and desolate headland. A few juniper trees were scattered here and there; all other vegetation was withered by the spray.[1] Here dwelt *Prince Henry the Navigator*, where the sight of the ocean continually inflamed his

[1] Major's 'Life of Prince Henry.'

thoughts.[1] Here he established the first naval school, and laid the foundations of naval science.[2] His court resembled a convent. No ladies were there, but only men of science—mathematicians from Germany, cosmographers from Italy, the famous Maître Jacques from Minorca, and knights-errant from all parts of Europe, who came to join his exploring expeditions. Henry was Grand Master of the Order of Christ, and had, therefore, ample revenues at his disposal. His vessels went forth from the neighbouring port of Lagos with the cross of the order painted on their sails,[3] and their instructions were to coast the Sahara till they came to a land of flowing rivers and green trees. Many years passed, much money had been expended, many widows and orphans had been made, yet the Black Country had not been discovered. Henry was bitterly attacked by the ecclesiastics and the people, who declared that he was wasting holy money and human lives on a chimera and a dream. But at length the Senegal was reached, and before Prince Henry died he became the most popular man in his country.

A fleet of caravels off the Cape of Good Hope; a gale blowing; the atmosphere dark; the sea running mountains high; a mutiny on board the admiral's ship. *Vasco da Gama* defies them all, and swears he will never turn back, but to India he will go. A few months afterwards he marches in triumph through the streets of Lisbon; the chief mutineers follow him in chains; the

[1] Barros. [2] Hallam. [3] Azurara, 'Chronica de Guiné,' p. 185.

sea-route to India has been found; Venice is ruined; the fortunes of Portugal are made; the Mediterranean thenceforth declines, and the Atlantic becomes the commercial basin of the world.

Oh, thou divine poet! whose verses, composed in misery and exile, immortalise the ancient grandeur of Portugal, must thy life illustrate her shame and her decay? Camoens was not one of those exiles who refuse their tears to the misfortunes of their country, or their bodies to her soil. He sailed from India to Lisbon, and wrote, 'The world shall witness how dearly I have loved my country. I have returned, not merely to die in her bosom, but to die with her.'

His last days were spent in a hovel, and his servant, a native of Java, kept him alive by begging in the streets. One day a noble paid him a visit, perhaps to order a sonnet for his mistress. 'Alas!' said Camoens, 'when I was a poet I was young and happy, and blest with the love of ladies, but now I am a forlorn, deserted wretch. See, there stands my poor Antonio, vainly supplicating four-pence to purchase a few coals.'

The noble went away without giving him the money, and soon afterwards the poet died. One of his friends inscribed upon his tomb the truest epitaph that ever was composed:—

Here lies Luis de Camoens,
He excelled all the poets of his time.
He lived poor and miserable,
and he died so
MDLXXIX.

ANANGA

To wander on the heights of Cintra chanting stanzas of the Lusiad which he knew by heart—to read on long winter nights the old historians of Portuguese India, Faria y Souza, Barros, and Osorio—to gaze on the relics of chivalry, and to build feudal castles in the air—such were the delights of Antonio d'Almeida.

As a child is sometimes born unlike either of its parents, but in the image of some ancient ancestor whose portrait has been preserved, so by the same law of Atavism or Reversion, human minds are occasionally reproduced in the mould and manner of a former age. Antonio was one of these revived antiques. Had a knight-errant risen from his grave into the nineteenth century, he could scarcely have found himself more ill at ease than the hero of our tale. He took no interest in the progress of the age; he did not read the 'Revue des Deux Mondes;' he had no admiration for the products of the period—liberal institutions, parliamentary representation, philanthropy, atheism, go-aheadism, steam, and manufactures. His mind resided in the ruins of the past. His intellect was retrospective. In dreams, vivid as memories, he saw the Lisbon of the ancient days—the nobles riding through the streets attended by their retainers—the populace chequered by negroes and

Hindoos—the semi-Oriental maidens peeping from their latticed windows—the king blazing with jewels on his throne, and surrounded by courtiers upon their knees—the dimly-lighted cathedrals thronged with devotees—the monks chanting in the streets—the caravels weighing anchor for the East, to the sound of the trumpet and the drum.

D'Almeida was a student at the University of Coimbra, and distinguished for his knowledge of the classics, which he pursued with mediæval ardour. When he had taken his degree, his relatives wished him to enter at the Bar, but he determined to become a gentleman adventurer, and cast his eyes over the world. One day he read in the '*Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*' the narrative of a mulatto trader, who had been sent on a mission by the Governor-General of Angola to Matiamvo, a great king of the African interior. The traveller mentioned in his journal that beyond Matiamvo's kingdom resided a powerful monarch who had never been visited by any European. His kingdom was called *The Ivory Land*, for the inhabitants made their hedges and cattle-pens of elephants' tusks. Gold was also said to be abundant, and the women of surpassing beauty. D'Almeida's imagination was at once kindled to a flame. Here was a new world for him to discover. Unfolding the map of Africa, he viewed with a kind of ecstasy the blank space which occupied its centre. Who can tell, thought he, what strange and monstrous races exist in that unknown land? There unicorns and tailed men

may yet be found. Or perhaps it may be a lofty and salubrious plateau, inhabited by a cultivated race, resembling the Egyptians, the Chinese, or the Incas of Peru. Were not the ruins of stone cities discovered in East Africa by the explorers of the past? Have not the negroes often spoken of a white nation dwelling in the far interior? He read the old voyagers, and plunged into the archives of the Torre del Tombo. He consulted with merchants who did business on the coast, sold them his patrimony for calicos and beads, and sailed to San Paolo de Loanda.

The Governor informed him that the road to Matiamvo was open. The envoy whose journal he had read had been appointed to a post in the Mozambique; but his steward and interpreter, who was also a mulatto, could be engaged. This was done at once, and D'Almeida likewise hired some of the carriers his predecessor had employed. He started without delay, and his journey, though long and tedious, was accomplished without mishap. He was troubled now and then, especially at ferries, by the little village chiefs, who came riding to him in state on the shoulders of their slaves; but in the first part of the journey, after leaving Cassange, the people feared the Portuguese, and in the latter part they feared Matiamvo. On arriving at the capital, he announced his intention of staying three months, and of then passing on to the Ivory Land, or kingdom of Cazembe. Matiamvo replied that the thing was unheard of, and impossible. No Portuguese had ever been there. An-

tonio replied, that was just his reason for wishing to go. But the king could not, or would not, understand his taste for exploration. He wished the inland country kept dark, for thence he obtained the ivory which he sold to the Portuguese at cent. per cent.; and if the road was opened up, this broker business would be taken from his hands. When three months had passed, D'Almeida refused to return, and Matiamvo refused to let him go on. At this juncture a messenger arrived from the King of Cazembe, with a present of ivory and gold-dust. 'He had heard that the white man who was staying with his brother desired to come and see *him*. He knew that his brother would leave the road open, as they had always been friends.' This message was equivalent to a declaration of war if D'Almeida should not be allowed to pass. The nobles and captains begged Matiamvo to give in. He did so, with much reluctance; but concealed his pique, made the envoy a handsome present of English cotton cloth, and gave D'Almeida a guard of honour to the banks of the Ankona, a swift-flowing river which bounded his dominions on the East.

The mulatto interpreter had stipulated at Loanda that he should not be required to go beyond Matiamvo's land. D'Almeida was sorry to lose him, but could now speak the language fluently enough. Before they parted, the interpreter said that he wished to give him some advice. 'All African kings,' said he, 'like to keep a white man at their courts as a human curiosity, just as they like to keep dwarfs, hunchbacks, and albinoes.

With Matiamvo one is safe, because he has trade connections with the Portuguese, but this man neither fears nor loves anyone outside his kingdom. You found it difficult to pass Matiamvo; you will find it more difficult to return from Cazembe.' Antonio replied that he knew there was a risk, but he would take his chance. The mulatto finding him determined to go on, continued as follows:—'The king will keep you a year, and then if you wish to return (he will never let you pass him), he will not be able to detain you. Kings are governed by customs, and it is not usual to detain a stranger beyond that time against his will. But, for the love of Heaven, bear this in mind. If ever you marry a daughter of the king, your nationality is changed; you are no longer a white man, no longer a stranger; you become the king's son, or, in other words, his servant; you enter his house, and the people will no longer be able to interfere on your behalf. You will then belong to the king, and with him you must remain till you die.'

D'Almeida laughed, and said there was no fear of his marrying in Africa. He then wrote out for the interpreter a certificate of good conduct, and gave him letters for the Governor of Angola, and for the European mail. The mulatto went off with his men, and D'Almeida crossed the river in a bark canoe, while his goods were floated over in rafts made of a wood which is lighter than cork. He was soon met by the king's guard, and by musicians who blew him a welcome on elephants' tusks of enormous size manufactured into

trumpets. He was received in the town with the usual honours. The king put on his robes of state, which were made of bark cloth, soft and flexible as satin, and covered all over with shreds of looking glass, so that no one could bear to look at him in the sunshine. The courtiers crept towards him, throwing dust on their heads and clapping their hands; and when they spoke, turned their backs towards him. Ornaments of gold were profusely worn; the lintel and door-posts of the palace were of ivory curiously carved, but the cattle pens of tusks, if they ever existed, had been sold.

When a month had elapsed a messenger called D'Almeida to the king, who took him to an inner apartment of the palace, and drawing a curtain showed him a young girl sleeping on a couch. 'Behold,' he said, 'the youngest of my daughters. You are my white man, and I love you; pray do me the honour to take her for your wife.' D'Almeida thought it best to reply that he had a wife in his own country, and that it was forbidden by law and by religion for a white man to take more wives than one. The king shrugged both shoulders, after the manner of the Africans, and did not reply.

The next day one of the courtiers came to Antonio, and said, 'Oh, illustrious white man! our lord loves you dearly; why then should you vex him and put shame upon his head? If Ananga's face did not please you, why could you not tell the truth? the king would not have been offended. But how could you suppose he would believe so foolish a story that white men take

only one wife. It is contrary to reason. You might as well say that white men eat only one kind of food. A poor man we know must be content with one wife alone, just as he eats nothing but cassada. But white men are richer than kings.'

D'Almeida assured him he had told the truth, and affirmed it with an oath. At length the man believed him, and looked quite aghast.

'Cannot you see,' said D'Almeida, 'that we white men are different from you? I have no wife here, and I shall not take one while I remain. If I marry at all, I promise to marry Ananga, and none but her. Now, where do you see a black man who is not married?'

'That is true,' said the other. 'Even our slaves have wives, and if we give them none they run away.'

'I will tell you something more,' said D'Almeida; 'in my country are men who never get married, and women who never get married, and live by themselves all their lives.'

The officer put his hand to his mouth—a gesture of surprise—and walked slowly and thoughtfully away. In the evening D'Almeida was called to the king, who sat upon a couch, surrounded by his wives.

'My guest,' he said, 'we have heard strange news, that in your country there are women who never get married. Is it true?'

'It is true, O King,' he replied.

There was silence for a little while.

'Oh, white man,' said one of the queens, in a low, sad

voice, 'your words go through me to my heart. I think of these poor women living all alone—all alone. We know what men are; they can hunt, they can go to the war. But what is a woman that hath not a man? A woman is like unto the climbing yam, that must wind its young arms around the pole before it can shine into its flower, and yield its rich fruit to the world. Take away its support, and it lies on the ground, withered and barren, trampled under foot. My sisters, speak I not true?'

Then the queens replied, 'It is true!' and clapped their hands softly, and warbled some words to a melancholy air.

Antonio attempted to make them understand the purity of the unwedded state, but they only laughed at him, and said, 'What is good to do, all should do; what is good to abstain from, all should abstain from. If, then, it is good not to marry, no one should marry; and then only the wild beasts would be left.'

Antonio gave up that part of the question, and proceeded to defend monogamy. 'God,' he said, 'had made men and women in almost equal numbers; it was, therefore, intended that one of each sex should be married to each other.'

The king hastily replied, 'That as men were subject to be killed by war, a surplus of women would always be left.'

But when Antonio proceeded to explain the power and prerogatives of the European wife—how she sat

with her husband at meals, and was treated by him as an equal, and had him all to herself, it was curious to see how attentively the queens listened to his words, and how they whispered to one another, that the white man's country was not such a bad place for women after all. And as he went on, they crept up towards him, fanned him as he spoke, plucked burrs from his trousers, dusted his boots, and uttered many exclamations of approval, till at last the king, rising up, ordered them off to their respective huts, and then, half-frowning, half-smiling, begged D'Almeida not to talk to them like that again.

'I have trouble enough with them as it is,' said he. 'Oh, my brother, they are difficult to rule; they take everything from me; they are never content. I cannot trust one of them. Others they may love; but as for me, I am not a man for them; I am a garden, I am gold-dust. Give! give! give! give! that is their cry from morning till night.'

The king spoke no more about Ananga, but D'Almeida often met her on the path to the brook. Sometimes she glanced at him furtively, sometimes she turned her head aside.

Hitherto, strange to say, he had not had a single day's illness, and began to believe that he was fever-proof. But now came the first attack, and, as always happens in such cases—for malaria seems to be a cumulative poison—the attack was the more severe for having been so long delayed. He took large doses of

quinine without effect. The natives steamed him over green sticks, and administered decoctions of an astringent bark, for they too suffer from the ague; but for many days his condition was desperate, alternating between stupor and delirium. At length the poison was eliminated, and the patient began slowly to recover. The first person whom he saw was Ananga seated by his side; and he was told that she had nursed him unremittingly. Her hollow eyes and wasted form told their own sad tale of anxious and unresting days and nights. As time passed on, he regained his strength, but she became more haggard and careworn; her complexion lost its beauty, her movements their grace; her smile was very sad. He asked one of the king's wives what was the matter with Ananga.

'Is it you who ask that question?' she replied. 'Have white men no eyes? have white men no hearts? Before you came here Ananga was reputed the loveliest girl in the town. The maidens sang her praises as they went with their pitchers to the brook. The wealthiest chieftains, the bravest warriors sued for her hand. But now you have refused her, and no one desires her in marriage. The girls jeer at her, and the children point at her with the thumb. You are now almost well, and she will no longer be permitted to remain in your hut. She will go—ah! *where* will she go?' And the woman burst into tears.

'O white man,' she continued, 'we people of Cazembe can bear the torture of the scourge without uttering

a groan ; but we cannot endure shame. If our chieftains are defeated in battle, they die by their own hand. If the gods are cruel to our women, and refuse them a child, they go into the forest and return no more. These unfortunates are buried apart, for we regard them as accursed. Their souls pass not with ours to the Under-world ; for ever and ever they wander in the Land of Night, and behold not the gods, nor the spirits of the dead.'

D'Almeida knew that she spoke the truth, and that these sensitive and affectionate Africans will sometimes kill themselves on account of an unkind word. He went and sat in the mouth of the hut, and called Ananga to his side. He took her hand in his, and passed his arm round her emaciated form. It was the sweet evening hour, when the fires flame brightly on the hearths, and the tinkling of the harp is heard. The ineffable delights of convalescence pervaded the body of Antonio, and softened his heart, and gilded his life with a fictitious charm. Why, thought he, should I not remain here after all ? My money is gone, and if I return to Portugal I shall have to drudge in an office, or to serve as a military slave in these poor days of peace, without hope of glory or distinction. Here I am honoured, and here I may be happy.'

There are times when such thoughts as these occur to all who have travelled in savage lands, even to those who know that a splendid success awaits them on return. Is it wonderful, therefore, that Antonio should have

yielded? He pressed Ananga to his bosom, and drank deep looks from her tender eyes; her love streamed into his heart, for she had learnt to love him as he lay long hours helpless in her arms; he whispered some words in her ear, and called the people of the king, and took the vow of betrothal. Then the town burst into revelry; bonfires were lighted; oxen were killed—oxen rare and precious in that country, possessed by the king alone. The feast continued for seven days; then the elders and priests were assembled; Ananga and Antonio drank palm wine together in their presence, and so they were married. The carriers of Loanda were paid their wages in ivory, and returned to the coast; D'Almeida remained in Cazembe alone.

* * * * * * * *

Two years passed. Antonio had adopted the customs of the people, had a seat in council on the king's right hand; he possessed immense plantations, and was served by innumerable slaves. He distinguished himself in hunting and war, and had acquired the grave and urbane manner of an African prince. But, as may well be imagined, he was by this time weary to the death. He did not wish to return to Europe, but he languished for action and change. One day he opened his heart to Ananga, but soon regretted he had done so. She was startled and amazed, for, according to her ideas of life, he had gained the summit of human felicity. Not only was he the greatest chieftain of the land—there was good reason to believe that the king would name him his successor.

She coldly advised him, if he cared for life, never to speak such a word again. He was not now a white man, but a prince of Cazembe, and it would be treason in him to desert his country. When he began to reply she placed her hands to her ears, and, looking at him angrily, passed from the house.

Then he felt that he was doomed to eternal captivity, and all hope went from him. He was struck to the heart, and began to pine away, and gave up hunting, and sat from dawn to dusk brooding on his couch. The fever fell upon him again and again. He bowed himself down: 'Let it take me,' he cried; 'I wish for nothing better.' Ananga overheard him, for he had taught her Portuguese. Then her eyes were opened; she perceived that he was dying.

Thus, by a singular caprice of fate, she was placed in precisely that position which he had occupied two years before. He had been forced to give up his country in order to save her life, and now it was her turn to do the same. But for her the struggle was harder, the sacrifice more severe. It is impossible even for patriots to understand how these people love their native land. It is with them indeed a religion, for in abandoning their country they abandon their gods. Yet the ardent love of Ananga triumphed over all. She promised her husband that she would aid *him* to escape, and go with him where he pleased, as soon as an opportunity occurred. He shook his head sadly. 'An opportunity will never come,' said he. When she saw that he did not believe

her, she led him through the forest to a meadow covered with ornaments and weapons. It was the cemetery of the town. Ascending a green mound in the centre of the field, she lifted up her hands and said, 'I, Ananga, standing on the graves of my ancestors, do hereby swear that before the moon shall be dark three times I will take my husband from this country.'

She then told him that to escape by the road to Matiamvo was impossible. As soon as they were missed they would be followed in that direction. Besides, Matiamvo himself would give them up rather than incur the danger of a war. But towards the east ran a large, swift river; on its banks were a ferryman's hut and a couple of canoes. If they took these and paddled down the river, they would soon be safe from pursuit, for the people of Cazembe had no large canoes.

Antonio again began to hunt, and strengthened his limbs for the journey that was before him. He and Ananga had often amused themselves with paddling in a lake that was situated near the town; they now practised this art every day. On several occasions they went out to the forest together, and remained absent two or three days. The natives had no suspicion, for they did not suppose that Antonio wished to go from them, and they looked upon Ananga as his guard; it never entered their heads that a woman could desert her tribe for a stranger. It was, therefore, easy for them to escape. On the eve of their departure, Ananga made various excuses to visit her

father and all the playmates of her girlhood. She went down to the brook and drank from its waters for the last time. Stretching forth her beautiful arms, she prayed the spirits of the town to forgive her, and bade them tenderly farewell. As they left the town in the grey dusk of morning she covered her face with her robe, that she might not see the homes of those whom she loved. She passed through the groves and plantations weeping and singing, and spoke to all the trees by name. But on passing the limits of the town she recovered her firmness, and, dashing away the tears with her hand, walked swiftly along. In the evening they reached the river, and encamped near the ferryman's hut, and as soon as it was dark stole down to the bank, seized the two canoes, and paddled all the night. They hid themselves beneath the bushes and slept throughout the day. There was no moon, and they passed village after village without being observed; it was the end of the rainy season, and the stream was swift, so that in five nights they had travelled far beyond the limits of Cazembe. The boar's flesh and cassada with which they had stored the canoes was by this time nearly consumed, and rocks appeared in the river, which made them fear that rapids were at hand. They therefore determined to land at the next village, and to strike by land for the Zambesi. D'Almeida had received much gold as tributary gifts, and Ananga's ornaments were of value. On these they hoped to live a considerable time.

D'Almeida had often written charms for the people of Cazembe. If their gold would not pass, he thought that thus he might earn food upon the way.

The wonder of the natives was unbounded when they saw a white man dressed in strange garments, and a girl who was covered with gold, and whose haughty features and delicate form showed her to be of noble birth. The canoes and paddles of the strangers were differently made from their own; the people believed they had come down from heaven, and pointed to the sky with inquiring looks. However, with the aid of gestures, they made themselves understood in the Cazembe tongue, for the languages of Central Africa are closely related. They told the villagers that they were passing to the great salt water in the East, where white men dwelt in houses of stone. The villagers gave them food without attempting to detain them, and D'Almeida, in return, wrote them some charms. In this manner they travelled for several weeks in a south-easterly direction, through a land of marsh and primeval forest. They met with no great towns; the natives dwelt in petty villages independent of one another. Some of these were pictures of neatness, the fields like gardens, and the streets swept clean; while in others the inhabitants were untidy and indolent, so that the pointed roofs were scarcely visible above the grass that grew in the streets. The character of the people varied much in other ways: by some they were welcomed and kindly speeded on their way, even their presents being often

refused; while perhaps in the next village they were subjected to extortion, and the people crowding round Ananga would fix their greedy eyes on her golden bracelets and rings, till she found it best to conceal them in her girdle. At last they arrived on the banks of a river a little to the north of Lake Ngami. The country opened out; they passed from the land of the evergreen to the land of the thorn; cattle became abundant. Finding themselves in a region where gold was dug, and had a fixed value—the people selling it in quills plugged with cotton—they purchased three slaves and a couple of oxen, which D'Almeida broke in to the saddle. He then had the choice of the road to the Zambesi and the road to the Cape. Having heard that the Portuguese were at war with the natives, he chose the latter route; and now, mounted on their oxen and attended by their slaves, they travelled through the land of the Northern Bechuanas without let or hindrance, for the custom of paying the road is not known in Southern Africa.

But before they could reach the colony frontier they had to traverse the great Kalahari Desert, sometimes called the Sahara of the South. It is a vast tract of riverless land, but covered with plants, for the most part having bulbs in which, as in reservoirs, moisture is stored. Water-melons are found, and on these the natives subsist when they cross the desert. But it happened in the year of D'Almeida's arrival that less rain than usual had fallen; the water-melons were scarce, and the wells were dry. A friendly chieftain advised D'Almeida

not to attempt the journey that season, and offered him and Ananga a home in his town. However, D'Almeida preferred to push on, and arrived in a village bordering the desert.

He requested the chief to furnish him with guides; the chief demanded a price which took all they had—not even Ananga's earrings were saved, and they were forced to sell their slaves as well. The guides, who were Bushmen, were then produced. They differed entirely from the negroes in appearance, and belonged to another race. They were dwarfish in stature, with high cheek bones, oblique eyes, and light-coloured complexion. Their hair grew in little woolly tufts separate from one another. Sheep's entrails were wound round their heads, and in these poisoned arrows were inserted, forming a kind of crown. The men carried bows, the women ostrich eggs for water and a basket, and sometimes a child.

Antonio and Ananga rode into the wilderness, the Bushmen marching before them. Large leathern bags filled with water, and also bags of Indian meal, hung over their oxen. D'Almeida therefore felt no uneasiness. The Bushmen, he knew, were well acquainted with the desert, for it was their home. They lived within it, roaming from spot to spot, and killing ostriches and antelopes and the golden jackal, the skins of which they delivered to the Bechuana tribe, who held them subject, and who gave them a little tobacco in return. D'Almeida could not understand a word of their

language, which had curious clicking and croaking sounds; however, he knew that Bechuanas lived on the other side of the desert, and the settlements would then be close at hand. One evening they came to a pool where the water was insufficient for the oxen, which wandered about moaning; the two chief Bushmen made signs to D'Almeida that they would take the oxen to another pool beyond some rising ground about a mile away. The two men accordingly went off, the others with the women remaining by the fireside. Night came on, and the men did not return; the others made signs that the pasture-ground was distant, and that they would be back in the early morn. But when D'Almeida awoke in the morning he saw only the ashes of the fire before him. The Bushmen had stolen his oxen and had run away.

He awoke Ananga and told her what had happened. A few words only passed between them, and one long brave look. They determined to struggle for their lives, and not to give up as long as they could walk a step. Fortunately he had his compass, and knew in which direction to go.

But how could they go far, poor souls, in that terrible desert, without water, without food?—above them the sun ascending and descending in a steel-blue sky; beneath them the adamantine earth; the grass so dry that it crumbled to dust between their fingers; the mimosæ with their leaves closed at midday as if it were the night.

Yet, incredible as it may seem, they walked three days; antelopes frequently passed them, and kept their hopes alive, for they did not know that there are certain kinds of animals which can live without water, feeding upon bulbs. On the evening of the third day, when their strength was almost exhausted, they espied a belt of trees lining the horizon. Perhaps water might be there; they would go so far at least, and then if water there was none, they would lay them down and die. They toiled on wearily, and just as the day closed they caught sight of a large lake which the copse had concealed till they were close upon it. O joy! joy! joy! they saw the sun shining on the water with its red and golden rays. They looked at each other and smiled, and tried to speak; but their tongues, hardened by thirst, clattered in their mouths like stones. They drew nearer and nearer till they could plainly see the waves rolling along, and the trees reflected with their green heads downwards in the water. They tottered on and on; Ananga looked again upon Antonio's face with her dimmed but loving eyes. Then she saw his lips turn white and tremble: he groaned, and, throwing up his arms, fell heavily upon the ground. Snatching his grass cap, she ran swiftly to the lake—she who but a moment before could scarcely walk. Then she became as if rooted to the spot. Before her was nothing but a piece of ground covered with a white crust. It was a saltpan which had produced in the slanting sunshine the false mirage of the desert.

She crawled back to Antonio, and laid his head upon her lap. So the night passed A little dew fell; she wrung out her cloth into his mouth, and afterwards chewed the rag between her teeth. This gave them some relief; at least they could speak to each other once again.

The day began to dawn.

'Ananga,' he said, 'we must die.'

'Yes, Antonio, we must die—together.'

'Do you love me, Ananga, since I have brought you to this?'

'I would rather die with you than live with another, my Antonio.'

Then she lifted up her eyes and said, 'I see a white animal approaching us.'

'It is a rhinoceros.'

'It is larger.'

'Then it is a white elephant.'

'It is larger than an elephant.'

'There is no animal larger than an elephant.'

'But I see it, my Gold—I see it. It is coming near.'

'It is Death on the grey horse,' said Antonio.

'Oxen are before it, my beloved,' cried Ananga. 'A man issues from its bowels. If thou art the spirit of Death, take us with thee; we are ready.'

They both fainted. Two great hairy dogs came up and sniffed them. On the brink of the saltpan sat a man on an English horse. His gigantic arms were bare

to the shoulder, a double-barreled rifle was slung across his back. 'What a sell!' he cried, 'and what a fool I was to think this could be Lake Ngami; we must be two or three hundred miles off it yet, according to the Doctor's map.'

He turned his horse from the saltpan, saw his dogs busy with something, and rode up to the spot where Antonio and Ananga lay senseless in each other's arms. He fired both barrels and threw his pith helmet high up in the air. A Hottentot, no larger than a jockey, came up on a blood-horse at racing speed.

When Antonio recovered his senses, he found himself lying in a white-tilted waggon in a comfortable cot; Ananga was bending over him and moistening his lips with a sponge. She would let no one touch him but herself, not even their preserver.

This was Mr. Reginald Morris, of the E. I. C. S., who was spending his holidays as a hunter in South Africa, and was now bound for Lake Ngami, which Dr. Livingstone had discovered a few years before. By the time that Antonio was recovered they had reached the inhabited country and the borders of the lake. They then rambled in various directions, following the spoor of the elephants. Antonio joined the gallant judge in his dangerous sports, and soon learned, in the language of his tutor, 'to appreciate the beauties of a grooved barrel.' What splendid sport they enjoyed—sports which our Nimrods of the future will read of in books with admiration and despair, as the golden age of hunting

departed never to return! And then their dinners—they were only suitable to giants—ostrich egg omelets, giraffe marrow puddings, elephants' pettitoes, hippopotami rumpsteaks! Add to this a life in the saddle, the healthy excitement of danger, a climate unrivalled in the world.

Yet even their Elysian life was not without its cares. The serpent has entered this hunter's Eden in the form of a little fly, which does not harm human beings even when it stings them, but slays horses and oxen with marvellous celerity. One day in a region frequented by the *tsetse* nearly ruined the expedition. Morris lost his best horses and all his spare oxen, and was forced at once to return. He crossed the Kalahari desert not without anxiety, but was then able to purchase draught oxen from the Boers. Next came rivers swollen by the rains, and his waggons, freighted with ivory, more than once nearly foundered, which would have lost him a large sum of money. These dangers being passed, they arrived in safety at Beaufort, where they remained a few weeks, and then went on by easy stages to the Cape.

The pleasure which D'Almeida felt on returning to civilisation was not unmingled with embarrassment. To him was now presented that dreadful problem, *How am I to live?* He had not a penny in the world. He felt himself lawfully married to Ananga, and intended on arriving at the Cape to be married again by a priest. And then what were they to do? Alas! the civilised world

is often a great Kalahari desert to those who have neither oxen nor slaves.

He confessed his troubles to Morris, whose clear and vigorous intellect at once devised the proper plan for him to pursue. On arriving at the Cape he should draw up a report of his travels, and despatch it through the Portuguese consul to the Government at Lisbon, at the same time requesting a colonial appointment. In the meanwhile he should proceed to San Paolo de Loanda, in the first English man-of-war, and there wait for a reply. The governor of Angola would doubtless give him some acting appointment; in any case he was sure of board and lodging in that hospitable land.

D'Almeida determined to act on this advice. He could not think for a moment of parting from Ananga, and even were it possible to take her to Lisbon, he knew that she would be miserable there, while at Loanda she would feel almost at home.

But Ananga herself was far from being happy. Her heart was all in her husband, and though he was always loving and kind, she perceived plainly enough that she no longer occupied the same position in his thoughts as before. While they were living at Cazembe, Antonio had taught her Portuguese, and had trained her mind to a level with the language. Compared with the others he had found her an intellectual companion, and had been intimate with her alone. Throughout their journey it is needless to say that they were all in all to one another. But now the long honeymoon was over, the

delightful monopoly was ended. Her first rival was Morris, but he was always courteous and kind, and in the evening used to give her lessons in English. But when they entered the settlements, Morris and her husband left her much to herself, and spent a great part of their time smoking and chatting with the Boers. She also read in the eyes of the white men more than one look of aversion and contempt. The Dutch farmers despised all people of colour, and the missionaries did not recognise her marriage. Now, Ananga was a lady in manners and in feeling. It is true that she had been accustomed to cook, to beat the rice or corn in a mortar, to go with her pitcher to the stream—such was the custom of her country, in which not even the queens and princesses were exempt from work. But she had always been treated with courtesy by the elders, and with deference by the people of the town. These injurious looks, and some words which came more than once to her ears, filled her with shame and indignation.

However, this trouble might have passed away in time. It was a more serious evil that the new world which she had entered began to bewilder and oppress her brain. The crowds that they met upon the road, the horses and waggons and carts, the great two-storied houses with windows (at first she thought they were mountains with caves), the shops filled with enormous piles of cloth, the curious objects which Morris borrowed from his friends for her amusement, such as telescopes magic lanterns, &c.—all these astonished and alarmed

her. She could not understand Antonio's explanations of the wonders which she saw; it seemed to her more natural that they were supernatural; and she firmly believed that she had come to a land of magicians such as she had heard of in the legends of her tribe. Her husband and his friend often burst out laughing at her stunned and stupefied expression when they showed her some new marvel, and little thought that in all this there was danger to her mind.

They were not far from the Cape when they came upon two shining iron bars laid side by side on logs of wood, and stretching across the plain in either direction, as far as the eye could reach. She asked what they were for, and Antonio replied, 'To-morrow, Ananga, we will show you something more wonderful than anything we have shown you yet.'

They stopped at a Boer's house close by, and were just in time for the mid-day meal. Antonio brought out her portion of soup and dumplings; for she never would eat with him, even when they were travelling together According to the ideas in which she had been brought up, it was not *proper* for the women to eat with the men.

A mysterious feeling prompted her to go and look again at the iron bars, and to see where they came to an end. She followed them several miles towards the south, yet still she could see them stretching away, far away. The sun had now set, and the brief twilight was over; she remembered that Antonio would miss her and be anxious, so at once set off to return, running between

the iron bars, which served to guide her through the darkness.

Presently a sound rose behind her like the humming of bees. She lay down, placed her ear to the earth, and heard a booming rattling noise. Then raising her head, and looking to the south, she saw something large and black coming swiftly upon her; she uttered a cry, and as if in echo to that cry came a loud whistling shriek, like that of an infuriated elephant, and as she sprang on one side the demon rushed past her with a terrible sound. Its breath, like a wind, struck her backwards, and the ground trembled underneath her feet.

Thus Ananga described the passing of the engine; and her nervous system then received a shock from which it never afterwards recovered.

On arriving at the Cape they found that an English gun-boat was just about to sail for San Paolo de Loanda. Morris called upon the commander and obtained a passage for D'Almeida and Ananga, who were married in the Catholic Church the day after their arrival, she having been first baptized.

When Ananga saw the ships she thought that they were animals, and asked how they were fed. Antonio told her they were only large canoes. When she came on board the gun-boat she lifted up her hands and said, 'It is not a canoe; it is a town!' She ran about from deck to deck, prying into everything with the prettiest looks and gestures in the world; and there was not a face in the ship which did not brighten with pleasure at the

sight. But when the steam was got up, and the engines began to move, she cried out that '*It* was in the town,' and, shrieking loudly, sprang into the sea.

She was picked up by Morris's boat, and taken on shore. The voyage was abandoned.

Mr. Morris placed an apartment in his house at the disposal of Antonio, and here was the closing scene of poor Ananga's life.

When her husband was absent, she sat quite still, with her hands folded in her lap, and her head drooping a little on one side, motionless and mute.

When he was with her she sat in the same attitude and manner, but with her eyes fixed on him, for hours and hours—eyes never wavering, never closed, never for a moment turned away.

She sometimes called for her father, and said she wanted to go home. Antonio furnished the room with mats, and gourds, and wooden stools, and a hearth in the midst, so that it resembled their hut in Cazembe. He bought a Caffre drum, and, tapping it gently, sang to her the songs of her native land.

In a few weeks her reason was restored, but she still drooped and declined, and became so weak that she was unable to rise from the mat. Yet the physician could detect no symptom of bodily disease.

By the verdict of her conscience she was guilty of a crime, for she had abandoned her kindred, her country, and her gods. She knew that she was dying, and dreaded the life beyond the grave. She prayed Antonio

never to leave her in the evening, for she said that when the sun had disappeared and dusky hours descended on the earth, the kings of Cazembe passed by her couch with their caps on their heads and their staves in their hands, and looked upon her sternly. She feared they would beat her after she was dead.

The physician departed and the priest came. He hung around her neck a rosary and crucifix, and told her that now she belonged to Jesus, who would protect her from the demons. His sweet and tender voice allayed her fears, and she believed that he had given her a charm to take her after death to the land of the white people. But when he attempted to describe the felicity of paradise—the city of precious stones—the music of the angels—the majesty of God, she shrugged her shoulders, and said, 'What do I care for these things? Will my Antonio be there?'

She asked her husband to wear a rosary and a crucifix made like her own; her last action was to hang it round his neck. This effort, slight as it was, extinguished her feeble flickering life: she gave him a faint smile, sunk back upon her mat, and expired, whispering his name.

Antonio d'Almeida never saw Portugal again. Soon after his arrival at Loanda he received an appointment in the Mozambique, and in course of time became Governor of Tete. He soon fell a victim to the climate, for his spirits were depressed by inaction; and, perhaps, there

was another cause as well. It was generally supposed that he had something on his mind, and the natives remarked that he had never been seen to smile. A French traveller arrived at Tete just after his decease, and the following extract from his book may interest the reader :—

'The natives under Portuguese rule are divided into two classes or conditions : first, the *colani*, who have land of their own, but pay tribute to the Government, and are forced to render service, and to do work, and to entertain the soldiers when required ; and, secondly, the slaves. The religion of the former class is compounded in equal proportions of Catholic and Pagan elements. This mixed or mulatto faith is also prevalent among those Portuguese who have lived for some time in this country. The people of Lisbon, as every one knows, are still in the eighteenth century, but when they visit Africa they become mediæval. It is quite common to meet with merchants out here who believe implicitly in witchcraft ; and the obsequies of the Governor of Tete, which I witnessed myself, were not precisely European. A rosary and a crucifix suspended from the neck of the deceased would have led one to suppose that he died in the Catholic faith, but in the coffin, at his own request, certain fetishes and charms were placed ; as, for instance, a girdle of beads, a sleeping mat, some hair-pins, armlets and trinkets of various kinds. It is strange that such articles of ordinary life could be consecrated by an idle superstition. The name of this gentleman

was Antonio d'Almeida. He is said to have made a great journey from San Paolo de Loanda to Cazembe, and thence to the Cape of Good Hope; and a brief allusion to which will be found in the *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, vol. xxi., but no account of his travels has ever been given to the world. He was certainly a superior man, for I found upon his bookshelf not only a well-thumbed 'Lusiad' of Camoens, but also a Homer, a Virgil, and a Horace, all of which showed signs of having been diligently used. I could find no manuscripts of any kind; but all over his books, on fly-leaf and margin, was everywhere scribbled one word—*Ananga*.'

BOOK III.

SENEGAMBIA.

MOSLEM AFRICA

I NOW left the South Coast, and took the steamer for the islands of the Cape de Verde, where I intended to recruit my health, and then cross over to the countries of the Senegal and Gambia.

I landed at St. Jago, the chief island of the group. The steamer remained there a few days, and so I resolved to visit the interior—not a very formidable undertaking, but, nevertheless, I failed, as will be seen. Walking through the streets of Praya in search of an hotel, I at last found a building, apparently designed for the entertainment of English visitors, for above the door was painted in large yellow letters, HOUSE, BILLIARDS, COFFEE. I hired horses and a mulatto guide, filled a large bag with boxes of sardines, preserved fruit, and penny loaves, and then, having mounted my degenerate barb, cantered over the sandy road towards the hills.

My guide, of course, commenced the conversation, by asking me if my father and mother were alive; and then went a step further than his negro forefathers

would have done, by requesting to be informed what was their age, how much they had a year, and whether they were good Catholics. In spite of my silence, he persisted in urging these enquiries. I attempted to turn the conversation, and desired him to inform me what were the resources and population of St. Jago; how the oil was prepared from the pulga nuts; what amount of coffee was produced to the acre; and so on. He disposed of these important subjects in a few words, and returned to his previous queries. At last, I solemnly warned him that if he did not leave off I would send him back to the town. He remained silent for a few minutes, and then commenced again. Accordingly, I took the bag, and gave him the sack—not in the gentlest manner. He rode off with a terrified look, evidently supposing I was mad; and, in fact, it was not a very sane proceeding.

Here I was, in a semi-civilised country, which is often more dangerous than a savage one, without arms, and with a bag which had all the appearance of containing valuable property. I could not speak a word of *crcole*, the semi-negro patois of these islands, which can scarcely be understood by the Portuguese themselves. I had already met with a charming specimen of St. Jago customs: having asked for a drink of water at a house by the way-side, I was told that I could not have it unless I paid a penny.

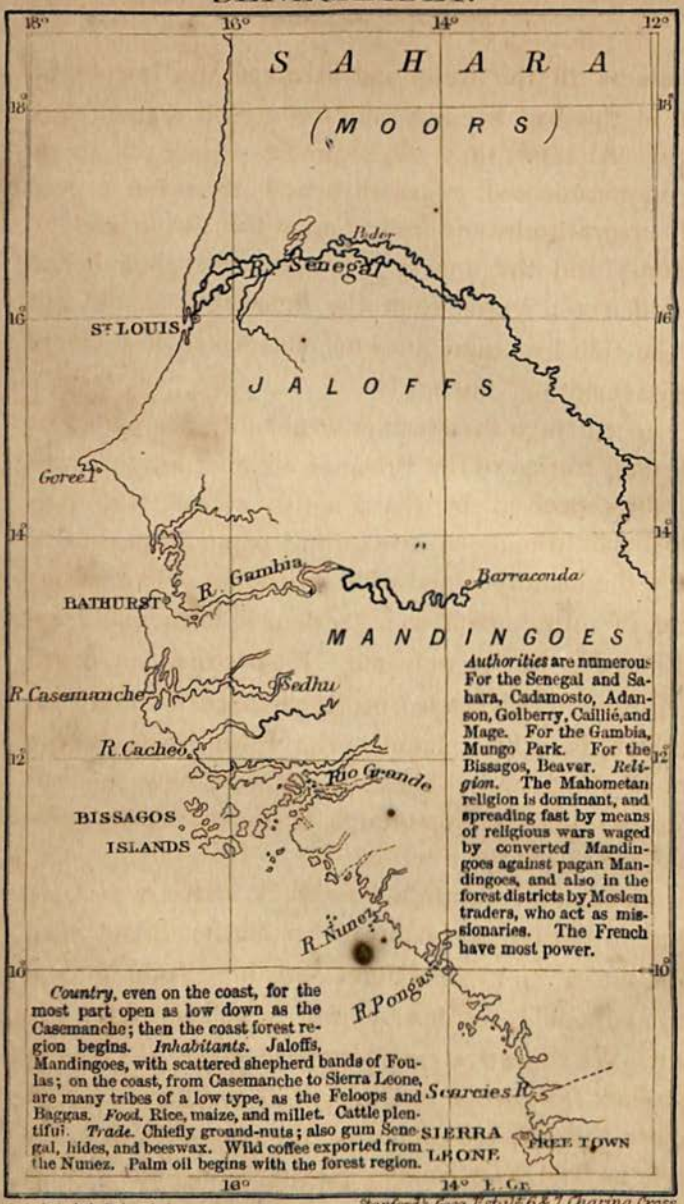
Prudence suggested return, but pride bade me go on. So, resolving to avoid mulattoes, and to defend

myself, if necessary, with the sardine corner of the bag, I rode along at the swiftest pace of which my gifted steed was capable. When it was nearly dark, I saw a cluster of cottages at a little distance from the road, and on riding in amongst them, observed a fat, mature, good-natured looking negress standing at one of the doors. I tied my horse to a pulga tree, approached the lady with an amiable smile, made signs that I wished to sleep, and gave her a silver coin, to signify that my lodging would be paid for. But the woman quite misunderstood the nature of my request, looked at me angrily, pocketed the money (they always give it back on the stage), and sent a little girl around the corner as fast as her thin black legs would carry her. She soon came back, followed by a man with glaring eyes and a drawn knife. Without allowing myself to be embarrassed by this circumstance, I nodded to the man with a friendly air, entered the hut, sat down upon a bench, and became very intent upon my bag. How well I understand the negro! Curiosity at once overpowered every other feeling. They all drew towards me on tiptoe. The mouth of the bag being sewn up, I beckoned to the man, took the knife from his reluctant but unresisting hand, opened the bag, drew out some coffee, gave it to the woman; and then, turning to the negro, pointed to the floor, and made signs that I wanted a shake-down. This time my pantomime was more successful, and they all gave an exclamation of assent. The man

sheathed his knife; the girl made up the fire; and the boy, leading my horse to a shed, put him up for the night. The master of the house shortly afterwards came in. He had been a sailor, and could speak a little English. Some kernels from the pulga nut, strung upon a stick, were lighted as a lamp. We supped together on bread, coffee, and sardines. A mattress was placed upon the floor; and covering myself with a ragged blanket, I lay down. The girl and boy repeated to their father a prodigiously long prayer, interspersed with yawns and genuflexions; after which the whole family strewed themselves around me. But this proceeding was not so indecorous as it seems. In Africa people dress to go to bed, and undress when they get up. So now, my companions covered themselves from head to foot with shawls of cotton, to keep out the wind, which entered freely through crevices in the walls. Then they slept the sleep of the peasant and the pig; the pulga light cast a flickering flame; and a sandy-coloured cat marched to and fro, protecting us from rats, disturbers of nocturnal rest.

In the morning I drank a cup of milk, warm and frothing from the goat, and having had sufficient of the gesture language, with its double entendres, rode back towards the town. And now I tested, not for the first time, the truth of that axiom, 'Give a nigger the ship, and he'll ask you for the long-boat.' In addition to some money, I bestowed on my rustic

SENEGAMBIA.



Authorities are numerous For the Senegal and Sahara, Cadamosto, Adanson, Golberry, Caillié, and Mage. For the Gambia, Mungo Park. For the Bissagos, Beaver. *Religion.* The Mahometan religion is dominant, and spreading fast by means of religious wars waged by converted Mandingoes against pagan Mandingoes, and also in the forest districts by Moslem traders, who act as missionaries. The French have most power.

Country, even on the coast, for the most part open as low down as the Casemanche; then the coast forest region begins. *Inhabitants.* Jaloffs, Mandingoes, with scattered shepherd bands of Foulas; on the coast, from Casemanche to Sierra Leone, are many tribes of a low type, as the Feloops and Baggas. *Food.* Rice, maize, and millet. Cattle plentiful. *Trade.* Chiefly ground-nuts; also gum Senegal, hides, and beeswax. Wild coffee exported from the Nunez. Palm oil begins with the forest region.

0 20 40 60 80 100 English Miles

Stanford's Geog. Estab. 6 & 7 Charing Cross.

London; Smith, Elder & Cº

entertainers all the fruits and sardines and bread and coffee in the bag, keeping only for myself a small box of figs. At first they were almost struck dumb at such unprecedented generosity, and then burst into a yell of gratitude, and called upon the Virgin and all the saints and the angels to reward me; but I had not ridden ten yards from the house before the girl with the thin legs came after me, and asked if I would not give them half the figs!

From St. Jago the steamer went on to St. Vincent's, the coaling station of the Brazilian steamer lines. I was hospitably received by the English consul, who suggested I should make a little sailing trip, and pass some days on the healthy island of St. Nicholas. He gave me a letter of introduction to a gentleman farmer, and assured me of a hearty welcome. I embarked on board the 'Aurora,' which landed me at the port of St. Nicholas, which is only a hamlet, the town being in the centre of the island. These waters were once infested by pirates; and the inhabitants, to escape their depredations, retired to the interior.

A merchant lent me a horse. A stalwart mulatto girl put my heavy portmanteau on her head, and then led off at a trot, sometimes breaking out into a canter, and would not hear of my riding slowly on her account. We came to a mountain path, where she sprang like an ibex from ledge to ledge, while my horse—which was quite the inferior animal of the two—followed her example as well as it could. Having gone about four

miles, I saw the capital of the island, which is called 'The Town of the Wild Stream,' in a valley or ravine beneath us; and the farmer's house, to which we were bound, on the summit of a hill beyond.

The town, with its narrow streets, grey houses, and rough paving-stones, reminded me of Lerwick; the gaunt barren hills, and the fields enclosed by stone walls, were also suggestive of the Shetlands; and the women (who were mostly mulattoes) were dressed in much the same fashion as the northern blondes—bare arms, bare legs, petticoat, and chemise. They were also equally industrious. In Shetland they carry peat, and knit stockings as they walk along—here they carry pulga nuts, and spin cotton.

I spent a fortnight in the mountain house, breathing an European atmosphere, sleeping in a cool bed, and eating good wholesome fare—cheese, milk, butter, eggs, fruit, beef-steaks, and legs of mutton—all from the farm. A clover field in the valley gave me an hour's quail-shooting every day. As for my hosts, they were good simple people, who knew about as much of Europe as we know of the moon; and once asked me, with an anxious air, whether it was really true that in England we had our dinner plates warmed before the fire. I told them that we never failed to do so, even in the height of summer. Upon which they shuddered, and their faces shrivelled up with sympathy, and they rubbed their hands, exclaiming, 'Oh, very cold—very cold indeed!'

I left this island for St. Vincent's in another little schooner, the 'Alerta,' and this time had a fellow passenger—a Frenchman, bound for Boa Vista. On arriving at that island, I found that the vessel was to remain twenty-four hours in the roads, and was rolling. I therefore felt inclined to go ashore, and jumped down into the custom-house boat. The officer asked me for my passport. I waved my hand placidly, and said that I had none, except for St. Vincent's. Then followed this colloquy, which they little thought that I understood, as I had only spoken French on board :—

'Is it worth while to take him ashore?'

'Yes, I think so,' said the Frenchman (who a few hours before had sworn eternal friendship); 'I fancy that he is a fool with money.'

'Has he any luggage?'

'Oh, yes, he has luggage.'

'I think, sir, you had better stay on board,' said a sailor, in English, putting his hand over the side.

The officer guessed at the meaning of this remark; told him, savagely, to mind his own business and shut up, and drew me, in a caressing manner, close to his side. The Frenchman told me it was all right, and that I did not require a passport for merely landing on the island.

He put me up in his house; and the next morning I was summoned before the mayor, and fined 4*l.* 10*s.* The Frenchman cursed the perfidy and injustice of the Portuguese; but I saw him before I went away in close

confabulation with the mayor and the custom-house official. They seemed to be dividing money.

The next day we reached Sal. Its wealth is a salt-marsh, with a tramway to the town, along which cars are sailed; and the pumps are worked in a similar manner, on the principle of windmills. This contrivance is well-suited to these islands, where the wind seems seldom to fail.

Returning to St. Vincent, I went across in the French mail steamer to Goree, an islet near the main-land. It received its name from the Dutch, belonged to the English in the days of Mungo Park, and is now a French town. M. Rapet, a merchant, who had been my fellow passenger, invited me to go with him to his house on the Casemanche, a river south of the Gambia. We embarked on board one of the vessels belonging to his firm, and a voyage of two days brought us to the mouth of the river. We had to beat across the bar, the schooner stirring up the sand with her keel and leaving a yellow wake behind. Then we sailed up the river with the sea-breeze, anchoring during the land-wind, and often grounding on the mud. The lower regions of the Casemanche or Cazamanza are inhabited by the Felloops, a people of degraded type. They resemble in their customs such tribes as the Bapuku, but have one matrimonial arrangement which I have not met with or heard of elsewhere. When a marriage takes place the husband presents the bride with a waistcloth and a shift. When the shift is worn out she is free to marry another man if she

likes, and is taught to believe that if she is unfaithful before that time an evil spirit will carry her off. The wives, therefore, are virtuous; but it is not unusual to see one pounding her shift between two stones.

On the sixth day we arrived at Sedhu, a hundred miles up the river. I found that Rapet had a fine stone house with a flat roof encircled by a terrace in the Eastern style. He had also a library in which I found the works of Corneille, Molière, Racine, Pascal, Voltaire, and Rousseau. I had not beheld such a glorious sight as those well-filled shelves for many a *long day*; for there is no country, I believe, in the world where men read so little as upon the West Coast of Africa. I remember even now—it is just ten years ago—with what impatience I waited for the dinner to be over, and with what rapture I found myself alone in my chamber, lying between the soft white sheets, with a lamp burning brightly on the table and the 'Pensées' of Pascal before me. Every phrase awoke an idea; I soon became too excited to read any more, and extinguishing the light, abandoned myself to my turbulent thoughts. I was like a man who has gone so long without wine that he is intoxicated by a glassful. How often in London, where the author is obliged to read by way of business, where the noblest works will at times fall dead on the cloyed and sated brain, I have longed again for that book-thirst of the desert!

The country about Sedhu is inhabited by the Mandingoes, a tall, handsome, light-coloured race, Moslems

in religion, possessing horses and large herds of cattle, but also cultivating cotton, ground-nuts, and various kinds of corn. I made a trip of three days amongst them, and was much pleased with their kind and hospitable manners, the grave and decorous aspect of their women, the cleanliness and silence of their villages, and the abundance of milk which they presented to their guests. When they saw me reading a book they crowded round and watched me attentively as I turned the pages. It was a volume of the 'Dictionnaire philosophique,' which my interpreter told them was the Koran of my country; whereupon I was applauded by the elders for my piety.

The Mandingoes are strangers in the Casemanche, and told me they had no country of their own. As a nation they appear to lead a semi-migratory life, and as individuals they are intensely fond of travel. I met with men who described to me countries far away, which I little thought at the time it would be afterwards my fortune to visit and describe; they told me of the great war-city, Falaba; and of Bouré, with its golden mines; and of the strange race on the banks of the Niger, who could pass hours under water and catch crocodiles alive. They spoke also of the *Fang Jani*, or self-burning tree, which had the habit of exploding with a loud report and bursting into flames. M. Rapet was acquainted with the plant, and wished to grow one near his house for the purpose of experiment; but the natives had refused to allow it, declaring that it

would infallibly burn down their village: they had often shown Rapet the plant all black and charred. Mungo Park, who fully believed in the story of its self-ignition, had sent a specimen to Sir Joseph Banks, and it was found that the charred appearance was due to a kind of fungus, and thus the myth had taken rise.[1]

It often happens, I believe, that the traveller who passes a few days in a country, discovers facts which have escaped the notice of the oldest residents. A curious instance of this kind occurred to me here. I saw some lumps of yellow earth drying on the roof of a hut, and found on enquiry that it was used as medicine. I mentioned the fact to Rapet on my return, and he declared that I must be mistaken. Now he had lived in the Casemanche twenty years: he spoke the native language to perfection; he was a man of remarkable intelligence, and took an interest, as few traders do, in the customs of the people. If we had been arguing the matter in Paris, who would not have believed him in preference to me? But we were in the Casemanche, the natives were around us, and with infinite difficulty I persuaded him to ask them the question. Since then I have met with earth-eaters on the Gold Coast. In this latter case the clay is of a milky colour, and is used as whitewash for the houses. The workmen chew pieces as they are at work, and I have seen them with their lips all stained. The young people use it in fact

[1] Appendix No. VI. to Mungo Park's 'Travels.'

as a comfit; but the old people also take it as a medicine for palpitation of the heart.[1]

I spent my Christmas at Sedhu, and witnessed a curious ceremony on the Eve. The natives marched in procession, with hollowed pumpkins lighted up, and with the model of a ship in paper also lighted within. They then began to sing, and my astonishment may be imagined when I found that the tune and the words were those of an old English carol. The explanation which I received was this:—In the days when the Senegal was English, the natives had been taught to sing carols on Christmas Eve; these songs had come down from generation to generation, and had spread far and wide. So excellent is the memory and so fine is the ear of these people, that although they did not understand the meaning of the words, they pronounced them correctly after all that lapse of time.

The gun-boat that brought the mails came in, and I bade farewell to my kind-hearted host, and took my passage to the Gambia. The first sight which attracted my attention on landing at Bathurst was a number of negro policemen, who strutted about with staves in their hands and an air of inexpressible pomposity. As they never told anyone to move on, and as cooks in Africa are masculine, I was at a loss to understand for what purpose they had been organised. However, I was

[1] In cases of famine, earth is eaten to appease the cravings of hunger; but it has been proved by Ehrenberg that the edible earths are not foods. See also Mr. David Forbes' admirable paper on the Amyamara Indians.

afterwards informed that Anglo-Africans ride home upon them after dinner. Now what an interesting fact is this! What a touching instance of special dispensation! In winter a moss grows on the Lapland rocks for the sustenance of the reindeer. In the dreary depths of the Sahara the pilgrim discovers green oases and sparkling springs. So here in this desolate and benighted land, where neither cabs nor wheelbarrows can be found, Providence has furnished policemen.

The heat at Bathurst is severe, and the solar rays reflected from the sandy soil produce an intense and agonising thirst which water is unable to alleviate, and which can only be quenched by certain fluids artificially prepared. In other words a great deal of hard drinking goes on. A late governor of the settlement declared, at the end of the banquet with which he had been welcomed, that the Gambia must be the healthiest place in the world, for that nowhere else could men drink in such a manner, and continue to exist. However, the present generation in the Gambia—a generation on the coast lasts about ten years—is not so much given that way, and drinking on the coast, as in the mother country, is rapidly going out of fashion. It is true that there are still to be found some young staff-assistant surgeons, and some of those extraordinary members of the profession called 'palm-oil doctors,' who maintain that a diet of brandy is in West Africa essential to health; but this is a case of the drunk leading the drunk, and of both falling into the grave;

and the sooner such medical men remove themselves into another world, the better it will be for this one.

A steamer belonging to the settlement was going up the river as far as the Falls of Barraconda, and I was allowed to join the expedition. The voyage was diplomatic, presents being made for the benefit of trade to the chiefs along the river banks. The country was one great grassy plain, with clumps and copses like islands in a sea: and here for the first time I saw game in something like abundance. We went out partridge-shooting, and often as we were walking through the grass trod up antelopes, which were squatting in their forms like hares.

In this region is found the *Oreas Derbianus*, a kind of eland larger than the Cape species, and therefore the largest antelope in the world. I had heard of its existence at the Casemanche, but failed to procure a specimen; but one was afterwards sent to me by M. Rapet, and was the first perfect skin that had ever been brought to Europe.

From Gambia I went to Goree and thence to St. Louis on the Senegal. Here the French have an Algeria on a smaller scale, and it is their ambition to unite the two by a line of forts and artesian wells. Their progress in Algeria has been already discussed with anxiety at the tea-parties of Timbuctoo;[1] and in Senegal the war-system is also in vogue, and was carried out for a time with marvellous vigour by Faidherbe—a name that has become historical. I went

[1] Barth.

The Djikrjanka (Orcas Derbianus).

up the river as far as Podor, passing many block-houses, which had often been besieged by the natives; and in these obscure and lonely spots, prodigies of valour had been achieved, worthy of being celebrated by MM. Erckmann and Chatrian. But yet I found on my second visit to the coast that this system of war had not proved a success, and it was not even safe to go along the beach from St. Louis to Goree. Campaigns can only be made during two or three months in the year; the natives are as brave and stubborn as the Arabs, and possess a terrible ally in the climate. And of what use is it to conquer these half-naked people and their clusters of mud huts.? And how can white men occupy this fever-stricken land? European Powers in the present generation should be content to take such measures as will serve to secure and facilitate trade. The coast should everywhere be occupied; this we know is of advantage, for the trade of Lagos has mightily increased since its cession to Great Britain in 1861. The next object of Government should be to suppress the native wars which so frequently interfere with trade, and to remove those obstacles to intercourse between the white man and the natives of the interior which are always interposed by the natives of the coast. The Fantis, for instance, will not allow the gold-producing Ashantis to come down to Cape Coast Castle. The natives of the Niger Delta attack the steamers which ascend the river. Such people have always gained their living by acting as middle-men

between the producers and consumers, and it can hardly be expected that they will consent to starve. But the remedy is very simple. Let annual stipends be paid to all chiefs who have the power to injure European trade, and let the stipend be suspended or withdrawn whenever the chiefs obstruct native caravans, or make war upon their neighbours. This system is not a theory: it has been put into practice at Sierra Leone, and has proved a complete success. Every year a number of chiefs repair to Government House and receive their pay; and thus, without a soldier being stationed outside the Peninsula, a large region of the interior is to all intents and purposes under British rule. It is not the money that these chieftains care for, but the honour of an alliance with the white man. This system is also self-supporting, for the expenses of payment are more than defrayed by the development of trade and the revenues thence received. In this manner Africa might be conquered, by money, not by arms.

The Senegal divides the Sahara from the Soudan. On the one side, as Cadamosto related long ago, are the brown men of the desert, the tawny Moors, with lean haggard faces, hawk-like startled eyes, wandering with camels from well to well; in the dry season approaching the river, in the rains retiring to the desert, which then has a green season, brief as the summer of the Arctic Circle. On the other side, are the black, stout, comely Jaloffs, dwelling in fixed towns, and cultivating fields of corn.

A Flood in Senegambia.

The trade of this region is chiefly in gum, which exudes from a kind of acacia growing in copses on the border of the desert.

The Senegal rises in rainy mountains, and floods its low-lying lands in an extraordinary manner. Here and there the summit of a hill alone appears above the water, and becomes an island. But the short stunted trees are completely covered by the water, and a commander of a gunboat assured me that he had once steamed over a forest. Now, if my friend's vessel had run aground and the waters had suddenly abated, the singular spectacle would then have been observed of a steamer dry-docked in the upper branches of a tree.

In these floods the wild beasts are often driven to strange straits. Swimming in all directions, they take refuge on floating trees or on the island-hills. Too much alarmed by the flood to follow their amiable instincts and dine on one another, lions, leopards, jackals, antelopes, serpents, and monkeys are often found huddled together, as depicted in the illustration.

These wanderings of mine in Senegambia were without geographical value, or incidents of interest; but, as Bacon says, 'Travel in the younger sort is a part of education,' and here I learnt a lesson in the history of Islam. I found that religion spreading in all directions, and producing an extraordinary revolution in the minds and manners of the blacks. I found mosques and schools, and the languages of the country written in Arabic characters, as English and French are written in

Roman characters; and negroes reading the Koran, the 'Traditions of Mahommed,' the Psalms of David, and various Arabic works on law, grammar, history, and logic. When afterwards I pursued the subject in Caillié, Denham and Clapperton, Lander, Barth, and Mahommed el Tounsy, I found that Islam prevailed over an area of Negroland equal in extent to Europe,[1] and was yearly, daily, hourly increasing; and that this extraordinary movement, though due in part to religious wars, had everywhere commenced in pure missionary preaching, and may yet be observed under that aspect in many regions of the coast and the interior.

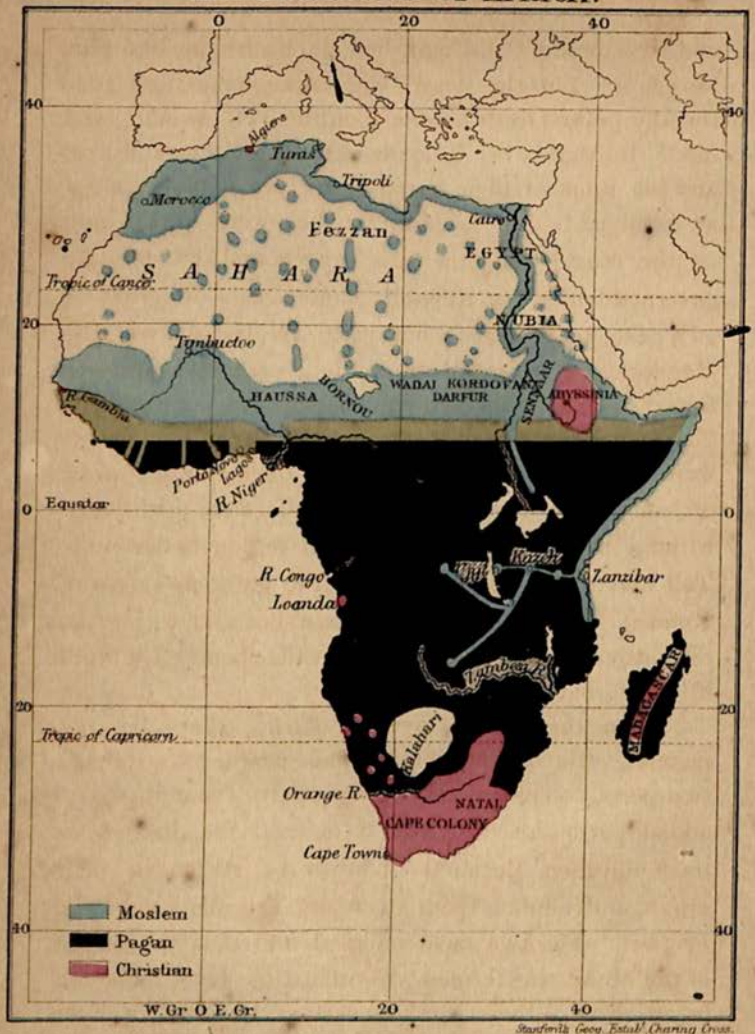
The Arabic MSS. which I brought home were recognised at once by Captain Burton as being written in the Moghreb (or western) dialect. This alone would suffice to prove that the Soudan had been converted from Barbary, not from Egypt, and historical documents[2] exist, which though scanty and imperfect, enable us to trace the origin and nature of the movement.

When the Romans conquered Carthage they were assisted by the native chiefs; and at first it appeared as if *Africa* would become a civilised province in the fashion of Spain and Gaul. Berber regiments served in the army; Berber princes were educated at Rome,

[1] A man might travel across Africa from St. Louis on the Senegal to Cairo, or in another direction from Lagos to Tripoli, sleeping in a village every night (except in the Sahara), and in every village he would find a school. This will give the reader some idea of the population and culture of Soudan.

[2] See 'Notes et Extraits de la Bibliothèque du Roi,' tom. xii., the 'Travels of Ibn Batuta,' and Leo Africanus.

THE RELIGIONS OF AFRICA.



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and soon became distinguished as historians and philosophers. But the desert was impregnable, and continually poured fresh hordes upon the Tell, or cultivated land. In Algeria the Romans were strongly established, and the ruins of their outposts are yet to be seen far away inland.[1] But in Morocco they were settled only on the coast.[2] Algeria was wisely and temperately governed under the Republic; and Cicero describes it as a peaceful province; but when the bad days of the Empire came, it was degraded to a corn-field, and was forced to feed, at its own expense, the Roman lazzaroni. The governors became satraps, the great landowners were accused of conspiracy, that their estates might escheat to the Crown, and the people were made agricultural serfs. Moreover, the wild region between the Tell and the Sahara contained the game-preserves of Rome. The lion was a royal beast licensed to feed on the cattle of the shepherd, and on the shepherd himself if it preferred him.

When the Arabs invaded Africa, they did not merely settle on the coast. This people, accustomed to deserts, conquered the whole country; but they also added persuasion to force, recognised the Berbers as their kinsmen, declared them to be Arabs in their origin, and allured them to accept the mission of the Prophet. The two races mingled, and thus the nation of the Moors was formed. At that time Jews abounded in Barbary; their brethren across the Straits were

[1] Barth. [2] Gibbon.

being persecuted by the Christian Goths; and the African Jews, it is said, instigated the invasion of Spain.[1] The Moors treated with indulgence the Europeans whom they conquered, and acquired the arts of the Romans and the Greeks. Andalusia civilised Africa; and the city of Morocco became the rival of Cordova and Seville. Between the literary men of the two countries an amiable controversy would often arise as to which might claim pre-eminence in learning and the arts, and it appears to have been allowed that Morocco was not inferior to Spain.[2]

The existence of a civilised North Africa soon made its influence felt across the desert. The camel was unknown in Carthage, and but rarely employed in the Roman days;[3] but now these animals were introduced in thousands, and the Sahara voyage could be made with comparative facility. Arab travellers of piety and learning took up their abode in the Soudan, and the Moslem mission work commenced. Mosques and schools, palaces with glass windows and painted walls,[4] sprang up on the banks of the Niger, and the glories of Granada were reflected at Timbuctoo.

Negro nations were speedily converted; crusades were waged against the Pagans; and negro Moslems, in turban and tobe, converted Pagan kingdoms, as the Arabs had converted Timbuctoo. Thus the work was continued from century to century, and thus it is still

[1] Gayangos, 'Mahommedan Dynasties in Spain.' [2] Ibid.
[3] Ritter. Barth, 'Wanderungen.' [4] Edrisi.

going on. In Cairo and Constantinople Islam may appear to be decaying; but in the heart of Africa it is young, vigorous, victorious, as in the early days.

The negroes, under the influence of this religion and its accompanying code of laws, appear to be an altered people. Restrictions are placed on polygamy and slavery; the position of the wife is elevated; drunkenness and gambling are abolished; clusters of wretched huts have given place to walled towns, with municipal governments; and immense regions have been opened up to travel and to trade. A large part of the Soudan has, in fact, ceased to be African, and has become Asiatic. The inhabitants are black, but their laws, manners, and religion are no longer those of the negroes, but of the Arabs. Their minstrels are men who go about chanting verses of the Koran through the nose;[1] their fetishmen are saintly adventurers, who travel from chief to chief, and from city to city, writing phylacteries and charms. Thousands of pious negroes make every year the pilgrimage to Mecca. Many perish on the road, and many return from the Holy City in a very unholy frame of mind; for, as the Tartars say of Mecca,[2] 'The torch is dark at its foot;' and, it was written [3] by the Ovid of Arabia:—

'I set out in the hopes of lightening my sins,
And returned bringing home with me a fresh load of transgressions.'

But the very wickedness of Mecca deepens real en-

[1] Caillié. [2] Vambéry.

[3] Quoted by Palgrave. All pilgrim cities, according to Wolff, are corrupt.

thusiasm into severity and wrath; and every year there is a steady back-water of bigotry into Tartary, British India, and the Soudan; the most distant lands being always the most devout, as in Oriental empires the outlying provinces always pay most taxes to the crown.

To Mecca may be traced those mighty religious revivals and political revolts which more than once have set the East in a flame; and at the end of the last century two pilgrims went forth from the Holy City, as Luther went forth from Rome, shaking the dust off their feet, and resolving to reform the age.

The first was Abd-el-Wahab, who established a sect, preached a Holy War, took Mecca and Medina, and was defeated only by the genius of Mehemet Ali and his semi-European troops. The sect, however, is still in existence, and still remains an element of power and disturbance in the East.

The other pilgrim created a nation. His name was Danfodio: he was a Foula from Soudan. The Foulas are a people of Berber origin, and were driven by war across the Sahara into the country of the blacks. In some parts of the Soudan they are light-coloured, and their hair is long; in other parts they resemble negroes, through repeated intermarriages with the females of the land. But however black they may appear, they call themselves white men, and look upon the natives with disdain.

A hundred years ago they were, for the most part, a miserable people, herdsmen by occupation, occupying

pastures by the favour of the native rulers, migrating from chiefdom to chiefdom, defenceless, and frequently ill-treated by the negroes. In this condition they may yet be seen in the upper regions of the Gambia, and are called by the English the Gipsies of the country.

Danfodio preached tenets similar to those of Abd-el-Wahab. He forbade the worship of saints, the practice of masses for the dead, and the undue veneration of the Prophet; but especially inveighed against the besetting sins of the Soudan—the unveiled faces of the women: the immodest dances and the music of the drum; the use of palm wine and millet beer; the writing of amulets and charms; the wearing of silk, scarlet, and gold; and the substitution of customary law for the Koran code. He sent letters to the kings of Timbuctoo, Haussa, and Bornou, commanding them to reform their lives and those of their subjects, or he would chastise them in the name of God. They received these letters from an unknown man, as the Persian king received the instructions of Mahommed, and their fate was the same. Danfodio united the scattered Foula clans into an army, conquered the negroes far and wide, and established a mighty empire, the capital of which is Sockatoo. This empire is decaying, but the Foulas or Felatahs are rapidly extending their power in the Delta of the Niger.

The following tale, 'The Story of Solima,' is entirely fictitious; but there really was an Oumar the Pilgrim, a

Foula by birth, who obtained the reputation of a prophet, and conquered the regions west of the Joliba. At one time he reigned from the Senegal to Timbuctoo. But Faidherbe defeated him upon the Senegal; and a few years ago he was taken prisoner by the Sheik of Timbuctoo, sewed up in the skin of a black ox, and cast into the Niger.[1]

Thus it may be seen that Negroland is not cut off from universal history, as Hegel and others have so frequently affirmed. In a previous chapter I showed that the slave trade has influenced the progress of man; and now it may be seen that a large tract south of the Sahara is included in the Eastern question. Whatever may be the future of Egypt and Morocco, will also be the future of Segou, Timbuctoo, Haussa, Bornou, Bagirmi, Waday, and Darfur.

It will be a blessed day for civilisation when the Russians take Constantinople, for then waste places will be tilled, mines that are now hidden will be opened, the commerce of the Mediterranean will be developed, and thus all Europe will be enriched. When that event does take place, the Sultan will probably establish his throne at Cairo, and the great work which Mehemet Ali commenced will be brought to consummation. The Turkish power is already advancing towards the Western Soudan,

[1] The last item of information, which may or may not be true, was obtained by me in Bouré. The Hadji's capital was Segou, where his son yet reigns. A sketch of Oumar's life is given in 'Mage, Voyage d'Exploration dans le Soudan occidental.'

or basin of the Niger, from two bases, Tripoli and Cairo, and by two routes, that of Fezzan and that of Kordofan. The kingdoms of Darfur, Waday, and Bornou will in time be clasped between two armies, as between two arms. Abyssinia, we may hope, will soon be rescued from its robber chiefs; and Baker's expedition is conquering for Egypt the countries of the Upper Nile. Let us observe with pleasure these triumphs of the Turks, for they are acting as our pioneers. When Mehemet Ali came to power the Nubian Desert was haunted by bandit tribes; those tribes are now companies of carriers, who let out camels for the use of tourists.[1] At the confluence of the Blue and White Niles were a few miserable huts. Ali touched it with his enchanter's wand, and Khartoum sprang into life, as Rhacotis became Alexandria; and now a railway is being laid down to it from Cairo. The next terminus will be Gondokoro; and the next—who can say? Perhaps Ujiji or Timbuctoo.

[1] Hoskin's 'Ethiopia.' Baker's 'Nile Tributaries.'

THE STORY OF SOLIMA

In the name of God the compassionate, the merciful

I WAS born and bred in a village in the country of the Foulas. When I was seven years old, I was taught to say my prayers and to curse infidels. When I was twelve years old, I became the pupil of a priest or marabout, who held his school every day beneath a silk-cotton tree in the centre of the village. To each of us boys were given a red cap and a white robe, to show that we were scholars —an honour which soothed us for our weary labours in the heat of the day. We had each a wooden board, on which were written the Arabic letters. When we had mastered the alphabet, the marabout wrote down some simple words, and the ninety-nine names of God, and finally 'Al Falthah.' This prayer we were made to learn, chanting it aloud, and rocking our bodies backwards and forwards to assist the memory. In this manner we learned the whole Koran by heart, without understanding a single word, and then our education was completed.

My father died when I was very young. He had been the chieftain, or Al Mami of the village, and my mother had determined that I should receive an education in accordance with my birth. Nothing delighted her so much as to hear me recite the sacred and myste-

rious words. I would stand before her in the humble attitude prescribed by the manners of our country, my left hand covered by my right, and would chant till my voice grew hoarse and weak. And then she would wind her arms round me, and lay my head upon her breast, and relate to me the legends of our tribe. How our fathers, in years gone by, came over the Sand, driven from their homes by a foreign race; how thousands died upon the road from thirst, or were killed by poisonous winds, or buried in the whirling clouds of dust; how, at last, they came into this country, and drove its people to the distant West, and took their daughters captive, and seized their herds of cattle, and from that time multiplied and prospered.

Then I felt proud of being a Foula, and despised in my heart the people by whom we were surrounded; the men of the hills, who were dwarfs in stature, and went naked, and dwelt in rocky caves; and the blacks of the West, who were often brought to our villages as slaves; and the Moors of the sandy plain, whose long hair fell to their waists, and whose faces were muffled to the eyes—whose hearts were perfidious and cruel—who lived by plunder, like beasts of prey.

I loved to recline at my mother's feet, to feel her soft hand as it caressed my face, the fire of the evening flickering upon us, and the voice of some scholar chanting in the distance. And sometimes she would tell me tales of the battle and the chase, till my blood turned to fire,

and I could feel my forehead burn. But when she observed this, she became sorrowful and grave. She would speak of the horrors of war and the dangers of the forest, of towns burning, of men slain, of women weeping over graves. Often she would attempt to tell me how my father died, but tears would always interrupt her words; and then she would beat her breast, and pluck her hair, and throw dust upon her head.

On one of these occasions, when her grief had been even more violent than usual, she sent for my master, the marabout. He arrived, clad in a white surplice, with a staff in his hand and a red cap upon his head. 'Father,' said she, 'I am resolved that the son of Hassan shall never become a shepherd. Let others defend our flocks and herds from the jaws of the leopard and the weapons of the Moors. I wish you to make him a wise and holy man.'

Then I lifted up my voice and wept; but my mother only shook her head. 'These tears,' said she, 'may, perhaps, some day save mine.' And the marabout crossed his hands upon his staff, and repeated a proverb of our tribe: 'The tears of the young are water, but the tears of the old are blood.' The next day he gave me the wooden board, and showed me how to copy some letters of the alphabet. I soon learned to write, for I was naturally clever, and I feared to vex my mother, who enquired every day what progress I had made. Yet, all the while that I was working, my heart was in the forest and the field. When the grey morning dawned,

I would watch with longing eyes the shepherds as they drove the herds from the town. Their songs, and the sound of their flutes, would ring in my ears all the day. But my chief delight was to see the hunter when he started for the bush. In the evening I would secretly leave the town, and wait for him by the brink of the jungle. If he had a gazelle upon his shoulder, I would beg him to place it upon mine; and if the blood trickled on my breast, I felt proud and glad. But I washed it carefully away before returning to my mother; for whenever she saw blood she shuddered and cried, and sometimes swooned away.

One day I said to the huntsman, 'I wish I could go with you instead of writing in the town. I would bear your weapons, and assist you to carry the game; for you are old now, my father, and often I see that you are weary.'

'It is true,' he replied, 'my hand sometimes shakes, and at night my feet are cold. But I must not yet repose beneath the shadow of my roof. There is no one here who has eyesight for a trail, or strength to hurl a spear. Who is to come after me? Who is to kill game for the town when I am gone?'

'Ah, if I might!' I cried.

'That cannot be,' he said. 'Your mother will never allow you to lead a life of danger.'

'And why is she so timorous for my sake?' asked I.

'Do you not know how your father died?'

'No,' said I; 'for when she speaks of him she sobs, and her words are turned to tears.'

'Listen,' said the huntsman. 'The Moors descended on our pasture-grounds, and drove away hundreds of our cattle. Then our chieftains held council; the war-drum was beaten; the young men were gathered; we followed up the trail. Your father was a huntsman; it was he who led the march. In two days we overtook them, for they were heavy with the plunder. We scattered them like dust before the wind, and regained our herds. But when the fight was over, two bodies were lying on the ground; their hands clutched each other's throats; their knives were buried in each other's hearts; blood flowing from their mouths had matted their grey beards together. We could not separate them; together they had died, together they were buried. One of those men was the chieftain of the robbers; the other man was Hassan, Al Mami of Missera, and father of the young Solima.'

'I should like to die like that,' I said.

He placed his wrinkled hand upon my head, and I felt it tremble there. 'Your father,' he said, 'was my friend, and I see that his heart is in your body. You shall never be a marabout. Meet me here every evening an hour before the sun goes down. I will take you to a little meadow near at hand; there no one will see us, and there I will teach you to shoot the arrow and to hurl the spear. At the same time be patient; do not offend the marabouts; and when the proper time comes I will try to change your mother's heart.'

Every evening I stole out to the appointed spot, and was not detected; but although I was diligent in my studies, the marabout seemed to suspect that my thoughts were often far away, and tried to rouse within me a love for my profession.

'It is a noble calling,' he said. 'The marabout is the king of men. He stands at the right hand of the chieftain, and whispers counsels in his ears. In the mosque he raises his voice, and all men prostrate themselves before him. When people are sick they come to him that he may heal them. Go they to war or to hunt, or on a journey, they pay the marabout, and he sells them charms. He has power and he has wealth. If he is young and wishes to travel, all paths are open to him. He loads his asses with merchandise, and journeys selling it from place to place. Everywhere he is received with joy and kindness, because he is a holy man. And when his limbs grow weary, and his hair turns grey, and he desires to repose beneath the shadow of his roof, a home is always ready to receive him. Never need he want for rice from the pasture, or milk from the cow.'

I listened to such speeches as these in a silence which he mistook for approbation. I bore in my heart the words of the old huntsman: 'Be patient, and do not offend the marabouts.' I preserved that outward composure which is an attribute of our race, and waited for the day when my mother's heart should be changed. He whom I now called my father had said that I should

never be a marabout. I placed a profound and childish faith in his words.

I observed that the huntsman spoke little. His life was divided into thoughts and deeds. I followed his example, became taciturn and grave, and devoted myself with such zeal to the exercises of the craft that my father would sometimes burst forth into exclamations of delight.

One evening he said, 'Your arms and eyes are sufficiently trained; you can shoot the arrow and you can hurl the spear better than I could at your age. But this is only the beginning. You ought to go with me to the forest every day.'

At these words my heart bounded to my throat. 'Every day!' I cried. Then I became sad, and for the first time began to doubt. 'My mother!' I said, 'my mother! Will she ever let her heart be changed?'

'It is not to be changed by reason,' he replied. 'A woman's head is wood; but her heart is honey. You must speak to her with your eyes. You must sit by her side without saying a word, and giving now and then a sigh; you must neglect your lessons, not as if from stubbornness, but as if from a feeling which you are unable to control. When your mother is near you, and believes that you are sleeping, you must murmur, as if in a dream, "O my mother, you are killing me; why do you wish me to be a marabout? Give me air; give me freedom; give me the life of my father." Then she will bend over you, and look closely in your face, and then

let tears fall upon your cheeks. And if she asks you afterwards of what it was you dreamt, say that you do not know—that it was a foolish dream, which would only give her pain. Assure her that you are happy, and that you wish to be a marabout. Be always sad when she is watching you, and she will watch you as animals watch their young. Be always cheerful when she speaks to you. Pretend to hide your sorrow from her, and let not a day pass without revealing it.'

I had never heard my father say so much before. When he had ended he relapsed into his customary silence. I followed his instructions with that cunning which boys often possess in a feminine degree. My mother said nothing, but her sighs would echo mine When I cried in my pretended dreams, she would come and sit by me, and wipe away my tears, and take my head into her lap. Then I would really sleep, and on awaking I would find that she had thus sat till the dawn, and that her weak and weary eyes were unable to meet the light.

Her distress pleased and encouraged me. She did not speak to me about the cause of my dejection, but I observed that she frequently drew the marabout aside, and conversed earnestly with him. She redoubled those caresses which she had always lavished on me. She would make me sit at her feet, as if I were still a child, and told me of monstrous people in remote and savage lands; of the people in the far East who had tails like goats; and of others who lived in the great river,

feeding upon fish. Above all, she used to tell me of the white-skinned cannibals. Far away towards the West, she said, was a river, so broad that one could not see the opposite shores, and so salt that its waters were unfit to drink. Beyond it dwelt a race of giants; their skins were as white as cotton, their hair was of strange and varied hues. By means of a contract with Satan, they were given the riches of this world, and although oxen and sheep did not exist in their country, they could easily procure them from foreign lands. But they loved the flesh of men better than anything besides, and by means of their wealth obtained great numbers of slaves from the country of the blacks. These white men had visited the borders of the Foula country, and it was feared that they would leave their own barren shore, and, aided by the Evil One, take possession of the whole country from the salt river to the sandy plain.

One day some villagers of the neighbourhood came running into the town, and told us that a white man had arrived at Ghadima, a large Foula town about three days' journey from our own. I obtained permission of my mother to go and see him, my master taking me under his protection. We found Ghadima alive with people, who were assembled in the square. To me there seemed to be more men in that one place than I had ever seen in all my life before. After some hours in the hot sun, I at length pushed my way into the front row of the circle which was formed round the

great tree. Beneath that tree sat the cannibal. He was dressed in clothes which fitted close to his body, of which they left nothing bare except the face and hands. These were of a sickly white colour, inexpressibly loathsome to behold. His eyes were blue, like those of the hyæna; his hair was straight and long, like that of a goat. His movements were awkward, and his whole appearance was rather that of some hideous ape than of a man. His feet were black and hoofed. Sometimes protruding his lips, he uttered a sharp whistling sound; and sometimes taking a cloth from his pocket, he concealed his nose within it, and made a noise like that of a horn. He was quite tame, and, though surrounded by so great a multitude, did not seem to be alarmed. I had turned away for a moment, when a murmur uttered by the crowd recalled my attention to the white man. His hands had disappeared! At first I supposed that, like the claws of wild beasts, they could be drawn in or put out at pleasure, but afterwards discovered that his dress was provided with two holes, in which he placed them when he chose. From the care he showed to hide his skin, even inventing this contrivance for the concealment of his hands, it was evident that he was ashamed of his deformity; and my master asserted that this repulsive whiteness of the skin was the mark which Satan placed upon his slaves.

The next day there was, if possible, a still greater crowd in the centre of the town. The tree itself was

covered with boys, who had climbed up and were perched among its branches. The white man stood in the midst, holding in his hand a small piece of hollow iron. A goat was tied to a stake a few yards off, and I heard the people say that he had promised to kill the goat with that iron tube, which was the bow and arrow of his country. When all was ready he pointed his weapon at the goat; a flame shot forth, followed by a cloud of smoke and a sound like thunder. When the smoke cleared away, the white man stood smiling; the iron had disappeared, and the goat was lying dead upon the ground.

He then passed through the crowd to his hut, and returned in a short time with something wrapped up in a cloth. He cast off the cloth, and we saw a piece of stuff which dazzled our eyes, for it shone like silver in the sun. A cry of admiration rose from the people. Then silence was proclaimed, and the chieftain announced in a loud voice that this garment would be given by the white man to that youth who exhibited most skill in the shooting of the arrow and the hurling of the spear. The dead goat was suspended from one of the branches of the great tree. The crowd cleared away on one side. Bows, arrows, and spears were thrown upon the ground. One by one the young men advanced, some choosing the bow, and some the spear. But they showed no skill. They complained that the sun shone upon the mark, that the weapons were badly made, and that they were not those to which they

had been accustomed. The white man curled his thin lips, and said the Foulas of our country should remain always at peace, and till the ground, for that the Foulas of other parts would conquer them in war. On this the chief of Ghadima cried out in wrath: 'Is there no one to gladden the eyes of the white man, who loveth war? Is there no one to win this raiment which is the mantle of the moon? Oh, hear me, youths! To him I will give a coronet of honour, and also the sturdiest spear, and a bow and quiver of arrows, and all that the hunter and warrior needs.'

I felt something force me through the people and press me to the front. 'But he,' cried the chief, 'who comes here to make the white man laugh, shall be tied to the great tree, and flogged till he bleeds.'

I stepped out into the open space. When the people saw my cap, which showed I was the scholar of a marabout, they scornfully laughed, and cried, 'Does your back itch for the rod, O silly boy?' And above them all I could hear the angry voice of my master, who, hedged in by the crowd, could not get nearer to me. 'Are you moon-mad, O Solima? What will your mother say to me when I go back? She will spit on my beard because I did not save you from disgrace.'

I chose a stout spear, and hurled it through the goat. 'Look to it,' I said; 'you will find it in the heart.' I shot an arrow, and it pierced the brain. The white man clapped his hands, and placed the robe upon my shoulders. The chief of the town crowned me with

flowers. The bow and quiver were slung across my back; I took the spear in my hand. Instantly I wished to return home. My fellow-townsmen on the way sang songs in my honour, and at every village related the story of my deeds. But my master was angry, and continually taunted me upon the road, calling me the hunter and the warrior, and asking me to go into the bush and kill him a gazelle, for he was hungry. But the honours I received enabled me to despise these insults, as they deserved. When we came near to Missera, my native town, the Mami and patriarchs met me outside the walls, and conducted me through the gates, while the minstrels played the ballafoo. The old huntsman threw his arms round my neck, and wept over me with joy. And under the silk-cotton tree I met my mother. Her face beamed with delight when she saw the silver robe; but when she observed the weapons that I carried, she turned away, and when the lowering face of the marabout met her eyes, she took me by the hand, and, looking at me sternly, she said, 'Solima, you have deceived your mother.'

The aged huntsman drew to my side; the marabout stood at my mother's right hand. I saw that in a few moments the fate of my life would be sealed.

'I hid my heart from you,' I said, 'for fear that you should hate it.'

'A mother cannot hate her son's heart,' she replied; 'but she despises deceit, which is the vice of a slave.'

'And is he not a slave,' said the huntsman, 'since you force him from his father's life?'

'He is her only son,' retorted the marabout. 'May she not save him from his father's death?'

'Oh, yes, yes,' cried my mother; 'I must save his life; before all I must save his life. Solima, you shall swear now, this very moment, on this very spot, that you will never be a hunter. Bring forth the sacred salt, O marabouts, and administer the oath without delay.'

A young virgin passed through the crowd. It was she who offered the sacrifice upon the altar, and who bore the banner in the battle-field. Kneeling before me, she held out a knife with three grains of salt upon its blade.

I took off my silver robe, while the tears streamed down my cheeks. 'My mother,' said I, 'to save me from imaginary dangers, you condemn me to life-long death.' I flung the bright garment down, and trampled it into the dust. 'Thus,' I said, 'I strip myself of happiness at your commands, and tread it under foot. The laws of the Foulas compel me to obey you: I obey.'

She raised her eyes, and looked long and tenderly upon me. I turned my face away, and falling on my knees to take the oath, I lifted up my hands, and cried, 'O spirit of my father, release me from this life, and take me to the shadow-world! No joy is there, but neither is there sorrow. But here my affliction is more than I can bear.'

All was silent. And then rose the song of triumph from a distant part of the town. The voices of the girls were loud and clear, and we could plainly hear the words: 'Solima, the son of Hassan, Al Mami of Missera—Solima shall kill game for the hungry of the town!'

The Mami approached my mother. 'Daughter of the Foulas,' he said, 'the elders of the people have considered this matter, and find that no one except Solima is fit to succeed yon aged man. They pray you, therefore, to leave him free, that his services may avail the town.'

My mother drew herself up, and turned her black and scornful eyes upon the chieftain.

'And think you,' said she, 'that I would give the town what I could refuse to my own boy's tears and prayers? I would see you all starve rather than he should know a moment's grief. If his hand is scratched by a thorn, that is more to me than all your miserable lives.'

Then she turned to the marabout. 'And you want him as a knife to cut your fruit! You shall not have him. *You hate Solima:* I saw it in your eyes just now.'

She turned towards me, and her face, from dark and scowling, became suddenly bright, as if the sun were shining on it. 'Come hither, my child,' she said. I knelt before her feet. She took my head between her hands. All the people bent forward, and there were tears in many eyes.

'Dear Solima,' she said, 'I have been cruel to you through wishing to be kind. I did not know that you dreaded this life so much. But do not be afraid, my darling; it shall now be as you desire. Huntsman, you were the friend of my beloved; before these people I give you his son, with power to command, and with power to chastise. Solima, behold your father; henceforth you owe him the duties of a son.'

She rose to return to her own house. The people made way for her to pass, and murmured, with one voice, 'May God sweeten your life, my mother!' and bent their heads, and folded their hands upon their breasts.

My father embraced me, and the people cried loudly, 'It is well!' But the marabout tapped him on the shoulder, and said with a sneer, 'Do you think he will be content to lead your life, to go out in the morning and return at night, to walk in the same paths until he knows the woods by heart, and to play the town butcher all his life? Look at his eyes—they are bright and restless as a bird's; soon they will want to see strange and distant lands. I wish you joy of your new son, huntsman. You will not keep him very long.'

But my father and I smiled lovingly upon each other, and walked together without speaking to the jungle edge. At that spot, where I had so often waited his return from hunting, we sat till it was dark, and discoursed upon our future plans. Every day he took

me to the forest, and taught me the tracks of animals, and how to find my way by the moss upon the trees. And then he instructed me in the deeper mysteries of woodcraft. A blade of grass crumpled, a leaf drooping, a twig snapped off, a pool disturbed, a bird's startled cry, an insect's hurried flight—such formed the alphabet of a language which I found more intricate than the Arabic of the marabouts. But I studied it heart and soul, for I had determined that I would succeed—that the forest should become my Koran, and the spear my pen.

In a few months I had learned the craft, and my father reposed beneath the shadow of his roof. Dressed in my silver robe, I was formally proclaimed as his successor; and, according to the custom of the country, the women brought rice and milk to my mother, and sang songs in her honour, no longer as the widow of Hassan, Al Mami of Missera, but as the mother of Solima, the huntsman of the town.

During more than a year I continued to exercise this calling. When my mother saw that my life was without danger, and that I had only to contend with antelopes and gazelles, or, at the worst, with buffaloes and boars, she became quite reconciled to my mode of life, and thanked God that the elephants and beasts of prey had been driven from the jungle.

How happy we were together then! We lived in the same house. Every day I returned at dusk, and she placed before me the evening meal. Sometimes she

fed me with her hands, as if I were a child; she was never weary of caressing me, and called me by the fondest names. My father made me tell him my adventures, and praised my perseverance and my ripening skill. But the marabout shook his head, and gave a cunning smile, and said, 'He has changed his paint once, and he will change it twice.'

While scorning the idea that I should ever tire of a huntsman's life, I often found myself longing for more noble game. I had tasted applause, that dangerous food which torments the mind with insatiable cravings. I had observed that the girls no longer sang of me when they went in the evening to fetch water from the brook, and had discovered that, to preserve one's fame, one must be ever doing something new. I yearned for an occasion to distinguish myself again, and this occasion came to me in a sudden and extraordinary manner.

One day the Mami of Ghadima rode into our town, accompanied by twelve elders whose beards were white as salt. They entered the council-house, where they were received by the ancients and our chief. Having conversed together for some time, they sent for me. I went and stood before them, my hands humbly muffled in my sleeves. A few moments passed in silence; then the Mami of Missera handed his staff to the Mami of Ghadima, who arose and said: 'Solima ben Hassan, during many weeks past, a lion has descended from the distant hills, and has preyed upon our folds. Our huntsmen search the jungle, snares have been laid

and pitfalls hollowed out; but all has been in vain, for our enemy is wary as he is strong. I have offered my daughter Fatima to the man who shall destroy this scourge of the land. Yet although my daughter can only be purchased with a herd of bullocks and a mountain of rice, although her husband will become my son, and on my death will be made Al Mami of Ghadima, no one has at present gained the prize; and we are forced to believe that no one amongst us has the hand or the heart to succeed in this enterprise, which we confess to be most dangerous and strange. So, remembering the skill which you displayed when merely a boy before the white man at our town, and having heard that you are now a practised huntsman, we resolved to come hither to Missera, and, having obtained the approval of its chieftain and elders, to invite you to contest among us in earnest as once you did in sport. How say you, Solima ben Hassan? Will you stay or will you go?'

'I will go,' I replied.

Then cried our chieftain, 'Go fetch my own horse, that Solima may ride forth as befits the pillar of the town. A youth ran to the door, then suddenly stepped back. We heard the tinkling of a woman's anklets, and my mother crossed the threshold. It was the first time that a woman had entered the council-house. The Mami rose and pointed with his staff to the door.

'You transgress against the laws of the Foulas,' he exclaimed.

'I am obeying those of God,' she replied. 'Solima, I want you ; come with me.'

I felt sick, and my knees bent beneath me. I turned my imploring eyes towards her. She looked at me fondly but firmly, and, stepping backwards across the threshold, beckoned me to come.

'Soon our herds will be destroyed,' said the Mami of Ghadima ; 'your son alone can save them. If you forbid him to assist us, what shall we do ?'

'Eat roots,' said she.

'Solima will cover his name with glory,' said the Mami of Missera, 'and the women of two towns will bring you bowls of rice.'

'I have food enough to fill me,' said my mother, 'and what you call glory dries no tears.'

I rose and tottered to the door, drunk with my misfortune. My mother took my hand in hers. Then a tall form came beside us. I looked up. The aged huntsman was confronting my mother with a jeering smile upon his lips.

'Stay a while,' he said, 'daughter of the Foulas. Why pluck away your son in such a hurry, as if he were a calabash of sweet milk that would spoil in the sun ?'

'Elders of Missera,' he continued, turning to the council, 'and ye of Ghadima who are our guests today, well know ye the laws of the Foulas. The son, until he is married, is the servant of his father, and if his father should be dead, the mother receives the self-same powers. Since the brave Hassan is no more, this woman

claims over Solima those rights which a father exercises on his son, and a master on his slave.'

'Such is the law,' replied the elders.

My mother tossed her proud and beautiful head. I attempted to pass out; the huntsman placed his heavy hand upon me.

'But,' said he, 'it is also decreed that the mother shall be able to make over her rights to a man who is of age and of standing in the tribe; and this right when once made over cannot be revoked.'

I felt my mother's hand, which still grasped mine, turn cold as that of a corpse.

'The father who adopts becomes the same as the father who begets. Authority can only return to the mother should the father of adoption die before the son be married.'

Then I felt the hand turn suddenly hot, and thrilling pains darted up my arm. This hand frightened me with its dumb eloquence: I did not dare look at my mother's face.

'It is enough,' I heard her say. 'I did it in a foolish moment, and in ignorance of the hearts of men. I did not know they were so hard. Solima, this man is, it seems, your father by the law, and you must obey him while he lives. I am only your mother. It is true I bore you in my womb, and with pain I brought you forth, and with love I fed you at this breast, and have cherished you without ceasing for nineteen years; but he has taught you to throw spears.'

She released my hand and walked composedly away. I opened my lips to tell her to return, but the hand of the huntsman closed my voice.

'Never follow the first impulse of the heart,' said he, 'or you will afterwards regret it; nor think that I will ever use my rights as a father except to secure the fulfilment of your own desires. Rest here till sundown in silence and thought. The elders of Ghadima will then ask for your reply.'

A few moments of reflection convinced me of his wisdom. I speedily forgot my mother's grief, and longed for the hour of sunset to arrive. It came at last; I sprang upon the horse's back, and followed the elders at a gallop through the town.

On arriving at Ghadima I summoned the huntsmen of the town, and asked a number of questions about the lion, whom they called the Father of Severity, and of whom they never spoke without some pious exclamation. I found them disinclined to give any information, and they affected to treat me with contempt. When I asked them where the lion went at night, they said 'Everywhere.' When I asked them where he slept by day, they said 'Nowhere.' However, when I was alone in my hut, a little boy came to me and said, 'Huntsman, if you really wish to find the Father of Severity, I think that I can show you where to look. But as for our fellows here, who go to the woods with their bows and spears, he is the last acquaintance they desire to make. In a jungle which I will show you, they came across his

tracks one day when I was with them, and they all agreed to keep it a secret and never to go near that jungle again.'

I agreed to meet the boy next morning outside the town; he took me a considerable distance to the edge of a thick wood which was surrounded by a grassy plain. I gazed for some time upon the black and menacing mass of trees; then I drew a deep breath.

'Let us return to Ghadima,' said I.

'You will not go in there,' said the boy with a malicious look.

'I will go in there to-morrow,' I replied.

'The Father of Severity eats by night,' said the boy with a shrill laugh, 'but to-morrow he may dine in the middle of the day.'

I picked up a plant as he spoke.

'Yes,' answered I, 'and I will begin to cook it for him.'

'What is that?' he asked, becoming grave with curiosity.

'Sauce for spearheads,' I replied. 'A drop of the juice of this plant would kill an elephant if it entered his skin—at least, so my father, the old huntsman of Missera, has often told me.'

The next day I went to the jungle, but without success. I could only find the footsteps of the lion. A whole month passed. The people broke out into laughter when they saw me returning at night; the *griot* or public minstrel composed a satire against me, and the boy

declared the poor lion would starve before I offered him my carcase.

I had searched the jungle through and through, but had never walked across the plain, in the midst of which a few bushes rose above the grass. One day I saw a vulture rise from the midst and fly heavily away. I supposed some aged antelope had gone there to breathe its last, and I slowly sauntered towards the spot. When I was near the bushes, I observed that they clothed the sides of a deep hollow, and at the same time I smelt a curious stench. I crept to the edge of the pit; its bottom was lined with bones and putrid flesh. *The lion* lay sleeping in the midst, surrounded by hideous birds begrimed with blood. I could not hurl my spear on account of the bushes that were between us, and crept round the side of the pit to a clear place on the other side, when a bird perceived me and gave a shrill cry: the vultures arose; the lion awoke; his green eyes caught mine; he bounded up the side of the pit. I hurled my spear, but it only ruffled the hairs of his back, and he seized me in his enormous jaws.

I swooned away, and when I was recovered, found myself lying at the bottom of the pit with my hand in a puddle of my own blood. The lion was beside me. Instinctively I crawled away; he let me go a few steps, then sprang after me, pulled me back, buffeted me with his paws, uttering a low grunting sound. I lay still as if I were dead; he rolled upon his back and struck me several times, scooping pieces of flesh away. Then I saw that

he was not hungry, and that he would play with me till he had slowly killed me. Once I felt inclined to rise and struggle with him, and so to make him kill me at once. But the hope of life is strong in man. I lay still; he rolled over me several times, almost crushing me beneath his weight. I did not move. He whined, thinking that his plaything was dead. Then he saw the blood which was flowing from my wounds, and lapped it with his prickly tongue.

Presently he ceased, and I heard him groan. I looked into his face; his eyes were coated with a grey film; flakes of froth fell from his mouth; long convulsive shudders ran through his frame. He curled his tail round continually, as if trying to brush something from his back. Then I remembered that the spear had grazed his back; it must have cut the skin, and he was dying from the poison. His moans became feeble and dwindled to sighs. Suddenly he raised his head and gave a dolorous cry, then let it fall lifeless on my breast.

I tried to move away from beneath his body, but in vain, and I felt my life pouring from me in my blood. I passed my arms round the lion's neck, and felt happy, for I was dying like my father. I tried to think, but felt something going from my brain, then a weakness and a dizziness, and I can remember nothing more.

It came to pass, by a happy fortune, that the Mami of Missera had sent to Ghadima a messenger, requesting

that I should return, as the town wanted meat. The chief of Ghadima was glad to receive this request. The laws of hospitality, so strictly observed among the Foulas, prevented him from giving me the least hint to go; but he had long since abandoned all hopes of my success, and he was not unwilling to part with a guest who occasioned him considerable trouble and expense. Accordingly he sent men after me at once. They were guided by the boy to the jungle he had shown me, and they tracked my footsteps to the pit. I was carried to the town; fresh butter was poured on my wounds. As soon as I recovered my senses, I asked for my mother; and when I had gained a little strength they took me home, by easy stages, in a grass-woven hammock.

My mother, who was famed for her knowledge of herbs, placed dressings on my wounds to extract the poison of the lion's claws. In a month my life was out of danger, and, though very weak, I began slowly to recover.

One day I was lying on the lion's skin, which had now become my couch; my mother was seated by my side weaving a grass mat, and sometimes stooping to embrace me. A Ghadima man entered, and whispered in her ear. She whispered back again. Then they both of them smiled, and looked at me. 'What is it?' I asked. She patted my cheek, and ran from the house. Then I heard the tinkling of anklets, and my mother returned, leading by the hand a young girl. It was Fatima, the daughter of the Mami of Ghadima. She

was adorned with trinkets of silver, and with pieces of transparent amber in her hair. Her father came next, and gave me his blessing. He was followed by the elders of Ghadima, who offered me the usual compliments. Although I could not take part in the festivity, it was arranged that the betrothal should take place at once. Goats were killed, and calabashes were filled with palm-wine. The *griot* sang a song in honour of the occasion, and the young people danced in the open square all night.

The laws of the Foulas demand that the betrothal shall last a year, and that the marriage shall be broken off if either declare in public, and with certain forms, that he or she 'repents of the betrothal.' It is also usual for the betrothed to dwell a part of this time beneath the same roof; and Fatima remained with us. She assisted my mother to pound the rice in the mortar, to draw water from the brook, to cook, and to clean the house. In a few days she had won my mother's heart, and they slept upon the same mat.

The first day that I was well enough to sit beneath the shadow of the roof, my father came to see me. My mother did not bid him welcome; she had not spoken to him, I was told, since the day of my departure for Ghadima. And although to myself she uttered no word of reproach, it was certain that she had a bitter recollection of that event; for once, when I was about to speak of it in order to ask her forgiveness, she held up her hand, and told me almost sternly to be silent.

'Heigh! heigh!' cried the huntsman; 'you are up then! It is well. New sport is waiting for you. Elephants are in the thorn jungle over the hills there, and they shall not be disturbed till you can go after them. But, O youth, be steady of hand and nimble of foot, for a wounded elephant is worse than a wounded lion, especially if he happens to lie on top of you.'

'What!' cried my mother, at length breaking her silence; 'would you have my son again go into danger? Are you not content with what he has suffered? Are not those wounds a sign that the life of the hunter is not for him? Do you wish then to kill him outright?'

To this string of questions my father replied with his accustomed coldness: 'Woman, your son has suffered no more than many a huntsman before him. He has gained a few scars, and a young man can wear no finer ornaments. Time enough to think of his leaving the craft when he is maimed or crippled, should God so will it, or when he becomes old and useless like myself.'

My mother retorted, and the discussion became a bitter one. It was ended by the old man saying, 'I am the boy's father, and I choose that he shall remain a huntsman. Should I die before he is married to this girl, it is then in your power to make him a shepherd, a marabout, a weaver, a blacksmith, or what you please.'

My mother shrugged her shoulders, and busied herself about the house. Two weeks passed, and the huntsman came again. He found me with my head in my mother's lap, and Fatima's fingers caressing my hair.

'You are a sluggard,' he said. 'You ought to be tasting the fresh air and exercising your limbs. So you would gradually gain your strength, and be able to go after those elephants whom fortune still keeps for you.'

As he said these words he looked at my mother with a sneer. To my surprise, she said, smiling and in her sweetest voice, 'What you say is right, O my father. Would it not be well if Solima were to drive the herds out to pasture till his strength is entirely recovered?'

'You speak wisdom, O daughter of the Foulas,' he replied. 'Solima must go to the fields, and Fatima can keep him company.'

At this Fatima smiled, and gave me a furtive glance. My mother asked the huntsman to join us in our morning meal. He consented, and praised the manner in which it was cooked. She asked him to forgive her the words she had formerly used; she was only a foolish woman, and had not known what was best for her son. Henceforth he should have no reason to complain, and she would leave my happiness entirely within his hands.

'And, my father,' she said as he rose to go, 'since you order my children to go to the fields, I shall have to eat my morning meal alone. Deign to give me the honour of your presence. I am the mother of Solima, and you are his father. Is it not right that we should sit upon the same mat, and that our hands should mingle in the bowl?'

The huntsman cheerfully assented. Every morning he ate and drank with my mother; and I was delighted to behold the reconciliation of those two whom I loved and honoured most.

Every day, at the first gleam of dawn, Fatima and I drove the cattle to the pasture. Our feet were sprinkled with the cold dew, and we drew our cotton robes around us tightly. On arriving in the fields, the bullocks eagerly cropped the moist herbage, while we nestled close to each other, and watched the eastern sky.

When the red clouds appeared, and the sun rising below them darted bright beams across the earth, every tree sent forth its voice; birds and insects fluttered to and fro; lines of antelopes crossed the plain.

And when the fiery ball rose higher in the heavens, the air began to dazzle and swim; the dew was scorched up; the grasses drooped; the antelopes retreated to the forest; the birds flew into thick bushes; the cattle lay down beneath shady trees. Scarce a sound could be heard, unless it was the rustling of a lizard, or the hum of those insects that only live in heat. And then, taking off our upper robes, we reclined in the fragrant grass. Fatima played some plaintive melody upon her flute, while I clapped my hands to the measure, and murmured to it words of war, of hunting, or of love.

When the sun had touched the tree-tops to the west, we rose and gathered the herd together, uttering cries which they were accustomed to obey. We drove

them to the village, and penned them safely in; we then entered the house to eat our evening meal, which my mother had always ready for us.

One day we returned earlier than usual, and found her sitting over the fire, watching some herbs which were boiling in an earthen pot. She gave a start as we came in, and seemed for a moment to be confused.

'What is that, my mother?' cried Fatima, who was inquisitive as a gazelle; and she stretched her lovely neck to peep into the pot.

'It is some medicine I am making,' replied my mother.

'Some medicine! and for whom? It is not for yourself. Oh, tell me, dear mother, are you sick?' cried the affectionate girl, winding her arms about her neck.

'No, no, it is not for me. Never mind for whom it is. You and Solima eat your supper, or it will be cold.'

'But you will eat with us,' said Fatima, in a coaxing voice. 'Ah, mother! it is you who are sick.'

'I am not sick, and I am not hungry. I am busy. Eat your supper.'

Fatima said no more. She spread the mat upon the ground, and placed the calabash between us. We dipped our hands in water, and then mingled them together in the bowl. Sometimes Fatima chose a

morsel, and placed it in my mouth; sometimes I did the same to her, and she pretended not to want it, and turned her mouth aside when I approached it with my hand. So we laughed and played; but my mother continued to sit before the fire, her head on her breast, her hands on her knees, and her eyes on the simmering herbs.

Then she gave a deep sigh, and said in a gentle voice, but without turning her face towards us, 'My children, bear with me; I am indeed sick, and it is for myself that I am making this medicine, though I said it was not. I wish to be alone a little while. Go out to the great fire, and talk with the young people.'

We went out, and sat by the great fire, which was kindled every night in the square, and round which gathered all who wished to talk over the news, or to tell stories, or to listen to the minstrel's songs.

When we went back to the house, my mother received us in her usual manner. She had taken the medicine, she said, and the pains that had troubled her were gone.

Two days afterwards, Fatima and I, as we sat in the pasture-ground, conversed upon our marriage. We sang a song to the sun, praying it to travel more swiftly through the sky; and when in the noontime Fatima slept with her beautiful face upon my arm, I reflected on the approaching change in my life. I should soon be a Man, with land and cattle of my own, and a vote in the council of the fathers. I feared I should feel

unhappy when I could not see my mother every day; and I should have to go from Missera, my native town. But then I thought how grand it would be to become the Mami of Ghadima, as I should be when Fatima's father died; and how pleasant it would be to have a son whom I could teach to shoot the arrow and to hurl the spear, or a daughter as beautiful as Fatima, who should marry the son of a great chief.

The evening came, and we arose to return. We had reached the brink of the jungle—that spot which I knew so well—when we heard a loud, dismal cry rising from the town. We stopped, and looked at one another.

'It is the death-wail!' cried Fatima.

'You drive the beasts in,' said I, 'and I will run on.'

'No, no; do not leave me,' said Fatima.

We drove the cattle as fast as we could. It seemed to us they had never been so obstinate and slow. Every time that we heard the cry of death, unconsciously we hastened our steps.

Through the shades of the drooping night came men and women towards us singing and weeping. This proved that the calamity was ours. Embracing each other, we sank upon the ground. The song of mourning floated to our ears, and told us the sad tidings—my father was no more.

His bed was surrounded by women, and chief among them was my mother. She was covered with

ashes, and had cut her forehead with a knife. The lifeless head of the huntsman lay upon her knees, and her tears rained upon his face. She sang in a broken voice his virtues, and his deeds of love; she reproached herself for the ill words that had passed between them long ago.

I enquired the cause of his death, but no one knew what it was. A young man happened to enter his house that afternoon, and found him dying in convulsions. My master, the marabout, declared that his life had been taken by an Evil Spirit. I stripped myself, and shaved my head, and covered myself with dirt, and entered the house of the male mourners. Three days we sat together, and neither ate nor spoke. Then the body of my father was buried, with his weapons and his dog; a white cock was sacrificed upon the grave; and a feast was held, at which the mourners gorged themselves with goats' flesh, and became drunk with palm-wine.

But I mourned him not only from custom but from love. For many days I would scarcely speak to my mother or to Fatima. Then the violence of my grief was abated; a sweet and tender melancholy took possession of my being. I placed rice and milk by the grave, and, invoking the spirit of the dead, I prayed him to come and eat with me. I conversed with him, as if he were alive, and told him the news of the town.

But I had now another cause for grief. Fatima was changed towards my mother, avoided her company, made excuses for sleeping on a separate mat, and

never addressed her except in answer to a question. To me she was still more loving than before; but when I asked her to explain this strange behaviour, she answered me only with affectionate caresses. One day she told me she was going home, and I went with her half a day's journey on the road.

As soon as I returned, my mother looked at me sternly, and said, 'It is over at last then; very well. Your father is dead, and you are once more my son. I command you to swear upon the sacred salt that you will never hunt again.' I said it was impossible. She called the marabout. He entered the house with the broad knife extended, and the salt upon its blade. He was grave and silent, but I could see triumph lurking in his eyes, and around the corners of his lips. I had then recourse to entreaties, but they were useless. 'The time has been,' said my mother, 'when I entreated you. But all that is past. You are now my slave, my dog. I command you to take the oath.'

Then kneeling, I dipped my forefinger in the salt, pointed to heaven, pointed to the earth, placed the salt between my lips, and swore that I would never hunt again.

I went to bed, and covering my face, I gave myself up to thought. I was young, happy, and of a sanguine disposition; I could look at all things from their brighter side. During the period of my mourning, the elephants had gone away, and I felt little inclination for the tame sport of the Missera jungles after my

glorious adventure with the lion. Dull and monotonous as the life of a herdsman might be, it could be little worse than that of the town hunter. Besides, in three months I should become a citizen of Ghadima, and I might distinguish myself as a warrior against the Moors of the sandy plain, who had lately invaded the neighbouring lands.

But the people of Missera were wroth against my mother, for they had to purchase the services of a young huntsman from another town. They gave him a wife, a house, and land. All this my mother had cost them. She was called to the house, and publicly upbraided by the Mami; the *griot* composed a satirical poem, in which he described how a she-hyæna had drawn the teeth and claws of a young lion; and this the girls sang every morning and evening as they went with their pitchers to the brook.

She spoke to no one except myself, and to me only as a slave. When I returned from the pasture, she made me perform the work of a woman, such as sweeping the house and cleaning the pots. She cooked my evening meal in such a manner that it could not be eaten, or gave me none at all. If I spoke, she struck me on the mouth with her sandal: if I was silent, she called me a dumb beast. She took a pleasure in reminding me that once I had humbled her, and cast her off before the people. She asked me in a jeering tone if I was not very sorry that my father was dead. Sometimes, indeed, she reproached herself for her barbarity,

and suddenly seizing me between her arms, covered me with caresses and tears. But these fits of repentance soon passed away. However, I consoled myself with the reflection that she had not the power to prevent my marriage, and that I had only a little while to bear. She seemed to read this in my face, for often she said, 'Ah, yes! I know what you are thinking of; when you are married, you will be free.' And then she treated me worse than before.

It will not appear surprising that I began to enjoy my herdsman's life. My only tranquil moments were passed in the fields; and this repose, which at other times would have been wearisome, now constituted all my happiness. I had no friends in Missera, for I was envied and hated by the young men of the town. Besides, I had never cared for their company, which, even when a boy, I had deserted for that of old men. I lived in the strictest solitude, and my mind, being no longer occupied by the business of hunting, or the conversation of Fatima and of my mother, was driven within itself. Compelled to dive into my own heart, I rose with my hands full of pearls. I discovered within me a new sense, a new power; sighs rose to my lips, and tears to my eyes, without a cause. By day, lying among deep shadows, I would give myself up to a torrent of confused and shapeless thoughts. At night, leaving my mother's house, I would wander forth into the wide and silent plain, and gaze upwards at the glorious sky. I began, in my savage ignorance, to speculate on the marvels of the world.

'Who has touched the stars with his hands?' I said. 'On what pillars do they rest?

'The waters are never weary; they flow without ceasing all the night and all the day.

'I cannot see the wind, but I can hear it roar. What is that strange power, and whence does it come?

'What makes the corn to grow? Who has given the earth the wisdom to produce?' Then I buried my face in my hands.

And then there came upon me wild and obscure ideas, which sweetened yet tormented my existence—germs of that passion which is of all the most enduring, the most insatiable, the most sublime—the thirst of knowledge, the yearning after the unknown.

My body being idle, my mind became excited. I loitered round the great tree, and listened to the scholars in the fields. I chanted verses of the Koran to myself. There were moments when I felt inclined to take the sacred oaths, to put on the white robe and red cap of the marabout. But I knew all that they could teach, and I desired to learn more. 'Are there men more wise than my master?' I said to myself. Then I thought of the white cannibal, and the hollow iron which gave forth thunder and smoke and fire and death. I thought of Timbuctoo, and of the tales which wandering marabouts had related of the wealth and learning of its inhabitants. 'There are marvels to be seen in foreign lands,' said I. 'Oh, if I could but go to them!'

And as this wish passed across my mind, the words of the marabout came back upon my ear: '*If he is young, and wishes to travel, he loads his asses with merchandise, and journeys, selling it from place to place. Everywhere he is received with joy and kindness, because he is a holy man.*' I must therefore become a marabout, thought I, if I wish to travel into foreign lands. After turning this over in my mind, I began to contemplate the prospect with pleasure. But suddenly I recollected my betrothal. If I travelled far away, I could not marry Fatima; I should never become Al Mami of Ghadima. Poor Fatima! And I had already almost forgotten her! These vague hopes had half erased her image from my mind. I began to hesitate and doubt, and almost repented of my betrothal. Yet no doubt I should have married her; the age of curiosity and romance would have passed away; and I should have fallen back into ordinary life, had it not been for a strange event, unlike anything that had occurred in our country before.

In the beginning of this history, I said that I was brought up in the Mahommedan faith; and yet I have described my countrymen performing Pagan rites, and crediting Pagan fables. This apparent contradiction shall now be explained. The Foulas are Moslem in name, but have retained many heathen customs. They worship the heavenly bodies, and make use of charms to protect them from evil spirits; they practise the art of magic; and vestiges of the old animal worship are preserved among them. When their youth are circum-

cised they are taken to the bush, and subjected to painful and mysterious rites, which a fearful oath binds them never to reveal. Besides this, they neglect the laws of the Koran ; in their towns is a mosque, but it is little used ; they seldom pray ; they drink palm-wine ; the rich men marry more than four wives ; the women do not veil their faces ; they know nothing of God but His name ; they are ignorant of the mysteries which the Koran reveals—the creation of the world, the succession of prophets, the mission of Mahommed, whom they suppose to have been a warrior chief. They know nothing of heaven and hell, but believe that the spirits of the dead go to a land of ghosts beneath the ground, and sometimes arise to hover around their sepulchres and homes.

My master, however, had taught me when I prayed to turn my face towards the East. In that direction lay the city of Mecca, the birthplace of Mahommed. He told me it was far away. The road thereto was through burning deserts, infested with genii, serpents, and robbers. But if the pilgrim reached the city, he was rewarded for all that he had undergone. The houses were of silver, and its streets were strewed with gold ; there was no sickness within its walls ; and in the Great Mosque might be seen four angels, who held in their hands the true Koran (from which all others were copies), and who were relieved every seven days by four other angels, to the sound of celestial music.

I had always believed that the pilgrimage to Mecca

from our country was impossible. I once asked my master if a Foula had at any time ever made the attempt. He replied that about fifteen years ago a young man named Oumar had left the country for that purpose, in spite of the entreaties of his friends. Since then no tidings of him had been received, and there could be little doubt that he was dead. His family had long since ceased to mourn for him; they had indeed looked upon his departure as his death, and had stripped their bodies and shaved their heads, and celebrated the funeral rites, as soon as the horizon had concealed him from their sight.

Such was the account my master gave me of Oumar, who had been surnamed the Rash and the Unfortunate. Judge then of our surprise when the news came to us that he had returned from Mecca, where he had gained enormous wealth; that he travelled everywhere, preaching the true faith, and war against the heathen; and that in a few days he would arrive at Ghadima.

As soon as messengers announced that he had reached that town, Missera became empty. The old men went on horseback, the young men went on foot. The excitement was greater than when the white man had been there, and in a short time I was almost the only man left in the town. But in spite of my earnest entreaties my mother would not let me go. Mad with rage, I was rushing to the wood, when my master met me, and made me return. At first I resisted, but he

said, in a solemn voice: 'Solima, do nothing foolish. I swear by the sacred salt that this day you shall go with me to Ghadima.' I went back, but did not believe his promise, and felt a bitter joy in being able to taunt him with a broken oath. We entered the house together, and found my mother in her usual attitude of gloom. Squatting before the fire, which had gone out, she was staring fixedly at an earthen pot, which hung over the grey ashes. When the marabout spoke, she turned quickly round, and when she saw that I was with him, hardened her face.

'Mother,' he said, 'Solima wishes to go and see Oumar the pilgrim. All the other young men are gone, as you know. To-day I am going myself; may I take him with me?'

My mother had turned her back upon him as soon as he began to speak. When he had finished, she said, without looking at him, 'No!'

'Solima,' said the marabout, 'I wish for a little conversation with your mother. I have some arguments which I think will remove her objections; but as they relate exclusively to yourself, I prefer that you should not hear them, at least, just now. Retire to a little distance, my son, and in a few moments you shall be at liberty to return.'

I went, and sat under the great tree. Thence I could see plainly through the open door the figures of my mother and the marabout. I could tell by his outstretched palms that he was still expostulating and

entreating, while she, with her back towards him, seemed to preserve an insulting silence. Suddenly she turned, and pointed to the door. He replied with the same placid gestures. She rose and placed her hand upon his shoulder. I could see that she was commanding him to quit the house. But he stepped across the room, and placed his hand upon the pot that was hanging over the ashes. Then I passed my hand across my eyes. What! did I see my mother kneeling at his feet? He looked over his shoulder, saw me, and closed the door. Some time afterwards he called me. My mother was outwardly calm, but did not speak in her natural voice. She told me briefly that her fears for my safety had made her refuse to let me go to Ghadima, but as my master was willing to take charge of me, her objections were removed. Only this I must promise, that during my absence I would obey him as a father.

I ran to saddle the horse, which the elders of Missera had given me for my services as huntsman of the town. What I had seen perplexed me; but I supposed that in some way or other he had worked upon her superstitions, as marabouts so well know how to do. He and I were now good friends, and on the way I opened my heart, and confessed that, were it not for my betrothal I should like to become a marabout, and to travel far away.

'Yes,' said he, 'were it not for that you might join Oumar, and go to the war.'

'Yes, were it not for that; but now it is impossible.' I gave an involuntary sigh, and I thought I saw him smile.

When we entered Ghadima we went to the Mami. While he and my master were talking together, I felt a soft hand placed upon my shoulder. I turned round, and saw Fatima. She led me into an adjoining house, which happened to be empty, and then flinging her arms round my neck, she said: 'O Solima, I have been so lonely, so sad, and when they told me your mother was ill-treating you, I felt as if my heart would die. But I have you now in my arms, O my gold! You pretended to come and see the Pilgrim, but it was really Fatima—was it not? Speak to me! speak to me! let me hear your voice.'

I was about to reply, when a loud, harsh voice sounded from without—'*Come to prayers! Come to prayers! Come to Security! God is great. There is no God but one God, and Mahommed is the messenger of God.*'

At the same time the marabout entered the house. 'The Pilgrim is going to preach,' said he. 'Will you come and hear him, or would you rather stay with Fatima?'

She took my hand, but I drew it away, and whispered, 'Soon I will return;' then hastened from the house.

The Pilgrim stood upon a high stone in the centre of the town, for the mosque was not large enough to

contain the congregation. He told us that the world was made by God, a great King who dwelt above the sky; and that after this life was over, those who had done good would dwell with Him in happiness eternal, and those who had done evil would be tormented in a fire which would never be extinguished. And in order that men might know what they should do to please their Sovereign and Creator, He had sent down upon the earth from time to time prophets or messengers, to instruct men, and to turn them from their sins. One of these prophets was Abraham; another was Moses; another was Jesus, whom the Christians profanely worshipped as a god; but the best and greatest was Mahommed. To him God had given a Book, in which was written, in words of divine beauty, all that was necessary for the guidance of man upon the earth. The laws and precepts of this book were imperfectly obeyed and imperfectly understood by the children of the Foulas; and so God had put it into Oumar's heart to leave the Holy City, to abandon those dear and sacred places hallowed by the memory of the prophets, and to revisit the land of his childhood, that he might save his countrymen from the fire and the death. He told us that this life was but a journey, a probation; and that the real life of man would be passed in the eternal land beyond the grave. Then he revealed the joys of heaven, and the horrible torments of hell. He stretched out his hands, and implored us to fast and pray, and give alms, and to abandon the forbidden pleasures of

this life, that we might inherit the joys of paradise. His burning and passionate words went straight as arrows to the heart. In all the crowd before *him* there was not one who did not weep. But as for me, who had been prepared for his words, as a harp is tuned for the hands of the musician, how can I describe the emotions which I felt? When his voice ceased, I listened and listened, hoping that I might hear him speak again. I ran forth into the fields; I knelt and prayed to God, no longer for me a name and a dream, but a great and living Person enthroned above the sky. I spent the whole night thus, and at day-break I returned home to the hut, where I fell into a slumber, disturbed by frightful dreams. I felt on fire, and cried out I was in hell. When I awoke I found myself surrounded by the people of the house. Fatima was weeping. Her father and the marabout looked at me with anxious eyes. My skin was burning; I was covered with pain as with a garment; and for three days the fever never left me. Fatima nursed me, but I called her by opprobrious names. I asked her how she dared to look upon me with her naked face. I called for water, that I might make the ablutions. I became delirious; and all my ravings were prayers.

I recovered my senses, but yet I seemed to be mad: for when Fatima began to sing one of those songs which I had loved so much, I ordered her with curses to be silent; and sending for the marabout, I prayed him to

chant some verses of the Koran, that the unhallowed sounds might be taken from my ears.

The fever was severe, but it quickly passed away; and as soon as I was well, I began to think how I could best break off my engagement with Fatima. As if conjecturing my thoughts, she knelt to me, and said that if I wished to follow the Pilgrim, she would leave her home and go with me. But this I knew her father would not allow; and, moreover, I no longer wished her to be mine. I know not how it was that my heart had been estranged from hers without a cause; but so it was. My affection had become indifference, and my indifference was now changed into aversion. I hungered for an ascetic and pleasureless life.

As soon as I was able to travel, the marabout told me he was ready to return. I had not yet broken off with Fatima, and determined to do so at once. The marabout gave me a hint, which I followed, little knowing to what it would lead. When Fatima came to bid me farewell, she asked me in piteous tones why it was that I had treated her so badly. I accused her of insulting my mother. She trembled from head to foot, and asked me to forgive her. I insisted on knowing the reason of her conduct. She said it was impossible to tell me. I charged her with deceit; she did not reply. But then seeing by my face that I would surely part from her in anger if she did not vindicate herself, she said that she would tell me all, if I promised that I would never speak of it at any future time; and then

sitting at my feet, and looking on the ground, she said :—

'Dear Solima, you remember that night when your mother was boiling herbs, how strange her manner was. The next day I found some stems and leaves thrown out behind the house. We girls are curious in herbs. I had never seen that kind before, so I stooped down and took them in my hand. Just then the marabout came by. "What are these?" said I to him. "A poison," he replied; "six drops of the juice would kill the strongest man that ever breathed." "A poison!" I cried, in the surprise of the moment; "but what could our mother want with that?" "Oh, has she been using it?" he said. "Well, you must know, my little girl, that all poisons are medicines if you use a little, and all medicines are poisons if you use too much."

'Next day, Solima, your father died. The marabout came to me and said, "*Be silent.*" I obeyed his commands, but I could not altogether dissemble. I could not sleep with your mother, nor pretend to love her as before.'

I felt that what she said was true. I remembered my mother's hatred of the huntsman, and her sudden reconciliation; and besides, the scene with the marabout was now explained. My resolution was at once taken. 'Fatima,' I said; 'if you really loved me you would not have told me this. Henceforth we are parted. *I repent of my betrothal.*'

I heard her give a low cry, rise to follow me, and

fall upon the ground. I ran from the house without looking back, sprang upon my horse, and telling the marabout to follow me, galloped out of the town.

My face must have shown my mother that I knew all; and from that hour we changed parts. But while her cruelty had known intervals of fondness, mine knew none. She became humble and resigned; but I was inexorable. She addressed me in a low, sweet voice; I remembered how sweetly she had spoken to the huntsman. At night, when she thought that I was sleeping, she caressed me with her trembling hands, and I felt the hot tears as they dropped upon my cheeks; but I remembered how she had sat by the corpse singing his praises, and raining tears upon him.

I passed all my time in chanting the Koran, in ablutions, and in prayers. A messenger arrived from the Pilgrim to say that he would shortly leave Ghadima to march against the Pagans of the west. He invited all good Moslems to join him in the Holy War.

My old master was willing and anxious I should go. I was now regarded as his chief pupil and his son: my glory would be his. Besides, my piety and zeal were placing me above him in the popular esteem. I told him to take my horse, and to meet me at the brink of the jungle. Exalted by sorrow and religion, I spoke to him as if I were the master, and he the novice. He bowed his head, and said that I would find him there. The messenger went before me to Ghadima with the news. I went at evening to the appointed spot.

'Have you told her?' said he, pointing with his chin towards our house.

'No,' said I; 'will you do so for me?'

'Yes,' he answered; 'I will tell her of it softly—a little at a time.'

I felt a pang of remorse when I thought of the torture and suspense this man would make my mother undergo. He hated her because she had insulted him before the people. Me also he hated in his heart; but I was useful to him as a weapon of revenge. I hesitated for a moment; at least I might tell her where I had gone. But I was now on the brink of the jungle, where my father and I had so often sat together; every sound among the trees, every perfume that rose from the earth, reminded me of him. I drove the stirrups into my horse's flank, and galloped swiftly away. But soon the shades of descending night obliged me to ride more slowly. I became calm, and throwing the reins upon my horse's neck, thought only of the Pilgrim and the Holy War.

But as I approached Ghadima a fresh anxiety tormented me. I should now be compelled to meet Fatima, to call the elders of Ghadima together, to demand in public a divorce, and to dishonour her before them all. When I remembered that her conduct towards me had been faultless, and her fidelity unchanged, I felt grief and pain; yet I resolved to do it, whatever might be the cost.

I arrived in the town at midday, and found that

the streets were full. I observed that every one looked at me in a strange manner, then turned towards one another, and laughed. A troop of girls met me—they burst into merriment; and one of them pointed at me with her thumb. A little farther on I saw Fatima seated beneath the great tree in the centre of the square. I half stopped my horse, but could not turn back. She was surrounded by girls, one of whom anointed her with oil, while another decorated her hair with flowers. A tall young man, one of the shepherds of the town, was leaning against the tree and playing on a flute which I recognised as hers. When Fatima saw me she said something to her companions, and they sang aloud the love-song which I had forbidden her to sing.

I was received in the usual manner by the slaves of the Mami, one of whom led away my horse, while another brought me a bowl of rice and milk. When I had finished my repast, I was informed that the elders wished to see me in the council-house. I found the building encircled by a dense crowd of people, principally women, who tittered as I passed through. Fatima was standing before the elders, in a haughty attitude, and elegantly adorned. In her hand was a thorny plant. Her father having ordered silence, asked her what she had to say.

'Father of my love,' she said, 'and Mami of Ghadima the son of Hassan is no longer that Solima to whom I was betrothed. Then he was a brave huntsman; now

he does nought but wash himself and pray. Therefore *I repent of my betrothal*; and I pray you to liberate me from him.'

According to custom, the Mami asked her three times if her mind was still the same, and three times she answered as before. He then bade her give me the thorny plant, and cast three handfuls of dust upon my head. To have avoided this disgrace I would have married her, and abandoned the course I had determined to adopt. I was at that age when one can sacrifice everything to escape from shame. But her eyes would not meet mine, with which I offered to espouse her. She came towards me, looking vacantly before her, with a smile upon her lips. As she placed the *plant of bitterness* within my hand, I felt that hers was cold. As she dropped the dust upon my head she breathed nervously and hard. Then with a gasp, which was heard by me alone, and laughing loudly, she sprang back among the crowd, and hastened to her father's house. The men shouted after her some sarcasms, but the women gave a loud yell of derision; and the town *griot*, dancing into the circle, sang a ballad which he had composed in ridicule of the rejected.

I was now completely severed from the past. My master led me to the Pilgrim, and explained that I wished to become his disciple, and a holy man. Taking off my silver robe, I laid it at his feet, expressing a regret that I had no better present to bring. But as it was esteemed of priceless value among the Foulas, I

secretly hoped that Oumar would be dazzled by its splendour. He looked at it, however, with careless eyes, and showed only curiosity to hear how I had obtained it. He then rose, and drawing a short curved sword, cut the precious garment into shreds. 'Young man,' he said, turning towards me, and smiling very sweetly, 'I praise the skill which merited this prize, and thank the heart which would bestow it upon me. But know that the Holy Prophet (all-praised be his name) has forbidden his followers to adorn themselves with such vanities as these. Only infidels and bad Moslems wear this glittering garb, which is called *silk*, and which is no stranger to my eyes. It is also forbidden to wear red cloth and rings of gold. For God observes not the body of man but his heart, which should be clothed in pious thoughts, and embellished with acts of godliness and faith.'

He looked at me keenly; and when he saw that my only emotion was regret in having worn that which was forbidden, he took a surplice and cap of his own, and placed them upon me. 'Henceforth,' he said, 'you are a marabout. I ordain you a servant of the Most High;' and he placed his hands upon my head.

We spent the whole day together; and when we were alone, I cast myself at his feet, and related my life, and especially my mother's crime, and implored his guidance. He reproved me severely for having left her without saying farewell, and ordered a messenger to be sent to her with a filial greeting from myself; and a promise that, with God's permission, she should see me

as soon as I returned from the war. He told me, in a gentle voice, how Mahommed being asked to which of a man's relations he owed the most love and obedience, replied, '*The mother—the mother—the mother!*'

'You think, Solima,' he continued, 'that the blood of that old man is on your mother's head alone. But no, it is also on yours; also on his own. Sins have their parentage, and hers was the offspring of his and your deceit. He taught you to assume sorrow, to shed false tears, to carry two tongues between your lips, to make your life a lie! He trained you to treachery, and by treachery he died.

'Your mother's crime is terrible, but it may yet be pardoned, for God is merciful and just. What says the prophet David in the Psalms? "A humble and contrite heart He will not despise." And the holy Koran teaches us that those who repent of their sins will be forgiven. Solima, it shall be the duty of your life when this campaign is ended, to return to your mother, to lead her to repentance and to save her soul. Even now I would send you from me, but as yet you know not Islam. I must teach you to read that Book, of which you have learnt nothing but the outward words.'

He then read to me passages from the Koran, translating them into the Foula language, and encouraged me to speak boldly, and to tell him what I thought. When I confessed that there were doctrines which I did not comprehend, and which even appeared

to me incredible, he replied that I must have faith, and that then all things would be made easy to my mind. I asked him what was faith. He took me by the hand and led me to one of the huts which the Mami had assigned for his slaves.

'Mustapha, come hither,' he said.

An aged negro came forth from the smoky interior of the room. At first I thought that he had been drinking palm-wine, for he tottered as he walked, and felt the air with his hands stretched out before him; but when I looked at his eyes I saw that they were all white and crusted over, except the edges, which were of a bright scarlet. I was alarmed at his appearance, for blindness is little known in the Foula country, in which are shady trees, pure waters, and no large tracts of sand. I shrank back as he approached us; but when Oumar reproved me with a look, I stepped forward and took his hand in mine, and assisted him to sit down upon a mat which his master spread upon the floor.

'Mustapha was born blind,' said the Pilgrim. 'Those beautiful things which delight our eyes are unknown to him. Tell me, Mustapha, who am I?'

When his master addressed him, a smile came upon his lips.

'You are Oumar, the Messenger of God,' he said, 'and the master of Mustapha's life.'

'How do you know me?' asked Oumar, seating himself also on the mat.

'I know you by your voice; I know you by your

breathing; I know you by your footsteps.' He passed his hand over the Pilgrim's face. 'And I know you by that,' he said.

'Mustapha,' said the Pilgrim gently, 'will it pain you if I speak of those things which you do not know?'

'Oh, master,' he cried, 'how can your voice give me pain? Whenever you speak my heart feels warm. Sometimes it feels cold, cold, cold, and I say to myself, "Poor Mustapha! soon, a little while, and you will not trouble your master any more." But when you speak, heigh! heigh! my blood runs, my heart dances, and I say, "Mustapha will never die so long as he can hear his master speak."'

'You know, Mustapha, that we have something which you have not. When we go to a strange place we lead you by the hand. Now I will tell you how this is. It is because you cannot see the light.'

'What is light?' said Mustapha.

'Solima,' said the Pilgrim, 'explain it to him.'

I tried to make him understand that it was something which made us see, but all my efforts were in vain. He only shook his head doubtfully, and stretched out his hands to feel this light which I attempted to describe.

Then I said, 'It is plain to me, oh my father, that since Mustapha has been blind from his birth he cannot comprehend the light or those objects which the light displays. Could he behold this speck of dust he could

imagine the rest. But he can see nothing, and therefore he can understand nothing.'

Then Oumar turned towards me.

'As Mustapha understands not the things of this world, so we understand not the things of the world above the sky. And as Mustapha by faith believes that there is light, which yet appears to him to be impossible by reason of his infirmity, so do we believe also in those mysteries which by reason of our spiritual blindness we cannot comprehend.'

The next morning we left Ghadima, Oumar riding before us on a beautiful grey horse which he had brought from the neighbourhood of Mecca. We were only fifty in number, and the Pilgrim intended to travel for a month through the Foula country, preaching in the mosques and gathering recruits. He no longer preached charity and fasting and prayer, but took always as the text of his sermon that passage in the Koran: '*Oh prophet! stir up the faithful to war.*' It was his intention first to collect an army, and to invade the blacks of the West, and the country of the Golden King. Enriched with the spoils he would return and unite the scattered Foula tribes, and conquer the princes of Bornou and Baghirmi, who were nominally Moslem, but who did not follow strictly the precepts of the Koran. Having established a great and holy empire, having restored the true religion in its purity, he would then invade the possessions of the infidel white men, and drive them into the sea.

We had arrived at the third town, and it was now

the sixth day of our departure. Few recruits came in, and the Pilgrim was much discouraged by the apathy and slowness of the Foulas. We were seated together in his house, and he was reading to me from the Koran. It was deep in the night, and all the town people were asleep. Suddenly we heard a noise outside the door; it was like a faint sigh, and was followed by a moan. I ran and opened the door: a human body fell heavily against me: I staggered: Oumar came to my assistance, and we laid her on a mat, for we found it was a woman. She was almost naked; a few rags hung round her, and her body was covered with dirt and her feet with blood. So horrible was her appearance that I looked at her with as much repugnance as compassion. But Oumar raised her head, and beckoned to me for the light. I brought it and recognised my mother.

God only knows what she had suffered on the way, and what strange instinct had led her after me to Oumar's house. I looked and looked again, scarcely able to believe that she could so have changed. From her soft and rounded limbs the flesh had wasted, and had left her bones angular and protruding. Her cheeks were two deep hollows, her lips of a bluish white, and her eyes, which had once been so beautiful, were small and dim, and sunk deeply in the head.

When she saw me standing before her an expression passed across her lips too horrible to be called a smile. She said *Solima* in a hoarse whisper, and held out her

bony hand. When I took it she fainted. Oumar sprinkled water in her face; awaking his slaves, he bid them kill a goat and boil some of the meat into a broth. As soon as she had drunk this her eyes became bright, and she began to speak. But Oumar bade her be silent, and directed the slaves to bathe her wounds. Then he touched me on the shoulder, and we left the house.

There is a period in all men's lives when a film falls from the mind, and we then look back with new eyes into the past. We read therein the brutalities of our boyhood: the insects we have tortured and killed in sport; the perverseness with which we have wounded the hearts of those who loved us; the blind unthanking selfishness with which we have received the tenderest tokens of affection Till this faculty of reason or conscience is awakened we can continue sinning in cruel ignorance, without scruple and without shame; but when once it has made its voice heard it is never silent again; and within the heart is established a divine and terrible tribunal.

When I saw the naked and wounded body of my mother, when she placed her emaciated hand in mine, I felt that I had been ungrateful and cowardly and cruel. I felt that were she to die, her only son would be her murderer. I looked nervously at Oumar, who strode through the silent street, his lips pressed tightly together, and his eyes upon the ground. I clasped his

robe and prayed him to speak. He turned and looked fixedly into my face.

'Ah, Solima,' he said, 'if that sight had not moved your heart I would have driven you from me for ever. The other day when I told you of your wickedness and your deceit, I saw that you did not understand me. But now you are saved.'

'And my mother?' I asked.

He was silent for a little while; then he said, 'You have been guilty of wrongs towards your mother; but she has committed an abominable crime; and until she has purified herself by penitence and prayer I may not join your heart to hers. Do not hope then to see her again at present. Go to another house to sleep, and meet me at daybreak at the western gate. This night I will pass with her, and will direct her in the right way, and will instruct her how she must live, to be reconciled with God in heaven and with you on earth.'

He pressed my hand and returned. I went to Mustapha's hut, and lying down beside him embraced him tenderly. I felt a sudden love for him because, like my mother, he was unfortunate. When I spoke he detected a peculiar tone in my voice, and asked me what had happened. I told all my troubles to this poor negro, whom a few days before I would have scorned to address; and my confidence was repaid, for he consoled me. 'No one,' he said, 'could resist the Pilgrim's words: my mother would do whatever he advised; and then after he had

destroyed the enemies of the Prophet he would bring me back to her again.' So contagious is faith that I went to sleep feeling happy and calm. The next day Oumar said to me smiling, 'Fear not, Solima, your mother is converted.'

As we rode from the town a man galloped up, his horse covered with foam.

'The Moors are upon us,' he cried; 'they have driven our herds away.'

'Where is their camp?' asked Oumar.

'It is behind that hill.'

'Why have you not attacked them?'

'They are too strong for us,' replied the man.

The Moors inhabit the great sandy desert, and make sudden forays on the Soudan. They are mounted on horses and camels, swift as the wind. They are armed with a spear, and sword, and a shield, on which is painted the image of a cross. Their faces are bandaged underneath their eyes with a cloth, sometimes black, sometimes white; it is put on early in boyhood—it is never removed, and is only raised a little when they eat. These people are terrible in war. The Foulas dare not meet them in the open field. But Oumar assured us of the victory, and his courage kindled a fire in our hearts. We rode to the top of the hill, and saw beneath us a camp of leathern tents, and men walking to and fro, and the plain covered with the stolen cattle. We galloped swiftly down the hill through the trees, and almost took them unawares. But they uttered cries, their horses ran

to them, and they sprang upon their backs. We charged at full speed. I fixed my eyes on one man, and galloped straight towards him. He did not see me coming, for his eyes were fixed on Oumar. There was a crash, and we sprawled upon the ground. I rose first, and found that his horse had fallen upon him. I stabbed him in the breast, and the blood spurted from his mouth. At this sight I howled with rage, and stabbed him again and again. Then I suddenly felt sick, but only for a moment. Looking round me, I saw the bodies of the Moors—not one had escaped. Here and there I saw some Foulas staunching a companion's wounds, while Oumar was searching amongst the corpses for that of the chieftain. When he found it was I who had killed him, he raised his voice, and said: 'O Foulas! honour Solima, the son of Hassan. While we rushed on these dogs, blinded with rage, he singled out the chieftain. Solima, I appoint you the lieutenant of my army.'

The temptation was strong, but I resisted it. 'O Pilgrim!' I answered, 'I dare not lie. I knew not that it was the chieftain; and his horse fell on him, so that a child could have taken his life.'

Then Oumar's eyes filled with tears, and he raised them towards heaven. 'O God!' he cried, 'this soul, which was reared in deceit, I restore to Thee pure as the water of the living rock. Solima, you have shown more courage than if you had slaughtered ten chieftains. Remain my lieutenant, and become my son.'

When it was known and spread abroad that Oumar had conquered the Moors, hitherto regarded as invincible, warriors crowded to him from all quarters, and prayed him to lead them against the Golden King. It was now the month of the Fast, or Rhamadan, and Oumar announced that he would set forth as soon as it was over. He made me live with him in the same hut; our mats were spread side by side upon the floor. This month was the happiest period of my life. From dawn to dusk we might neither eat nor drink; but I rejoiced in the torments of hunger and thirst, for now I tasted the sublime joys of sacrifice and self-denial. My whole being was elevated and refined; I dwelt not on earth, but in the land above the sky. I sought to do things to which I was naturally disinclined, that I might enjoy the benedictions which Oumar and my conscience afterwards bestowed. I went and sat amongst the lepers; I assisted the slaves to draw water at the wells; I begged alms of the elders, and distributed them amongst the poor. I looked forward to the future with tranquillity, for if I died in battle should I not awake in Paradise? And if my life was spared, I would devote it to my mother. How delightful it was to sit beside Oumar, and to hear him discourse of the happiness of heaven, and on the joys of gazing on the countenance of God. The life of that noble man was ever before me as an example. I saw with what patience he endured the privations and disappointments of his life, the hardness of heart, the ingratitude and coldness to which he was con-

tinually exposed. Never did I hear a word of anger or complaint issue from his lips. The Prophet, he would say, suffered more than this; he was mocked and jeered by the women, and pelted by the children in the streets. His kinsmen even refused to believe him; and his enemies sought for his life. 'O Solima,' he said, 'God sees all that we endure for His sake upon the earth; and He will console us in the life to come.'

Yet I observed that Oumar was sometimes gloomy and depressed—not on account of the troubles that were present, but in silent and solitary hours, or when he had been speaking of his younger days. Once he said to me, 'God is just, my son; God is just; but He is also compassionate and merciful.' Then he gave a deep sigh, and added, 'happily for us.' One night I heard him groaning. I stirred the fire, and bent over him, thinking he was ill. Then I saw that he was sleeping. But his face was distorted, and his hands were clasped; and he murmured, in melancholy accents, 'Have pity upon *me*, O Lord; have *pity* upon me—forgive me my sin.' Then the fire flamed up. He awoke, and gave it a horrible look. 'Oh bring me the Koran!' he exclaimed; and he read it till the hour of the morning prayer.

The Rhamadan was over. The troops were assembled, and we marched towards the setting sun. In two months we had passed the country of the Foulas, and had entered the land of the Mandingoes; who also were Moslems, and rode on horses, and dwelt in walled towns. We then reached the borders of the Lowlands.

The last Moslem town was situated on the verge of the Plateau. Beneath us lay a wide expanse of forest land, with rivers here and there, like silver threads. We descended the mountains with toil, on account of the rocks and ravines; and when we had once more reached the level land, we saw behind us the steep and gloomy hills, which, covered entirely with trees, resembled a high green wall. But all was hope and gladness among us, and the army presented a beautiful appearance. In front rode Oumar, distinguished by his turban and his fine grey horse. Above the mass of heads and shining spears arose green banners, embroidered with texts of the Koran in letters of gold. Every man carried a wallet, containing *kania*, a kind of cake made of millet flour; also ground nuts, and kolas, a nut which keeps hunger away for hours, or even days. Our journey was enlivened by the sound of horns and drums; and when these were silent, the red-capped marabouts sang canticles of battle, glory, and religion.

The Mandingoes of the plateau and the Pagans of the valley plain were almost incessantly at war, and between them was a tract of neutral ground inhabited only by wild beasts. On the evening of the third day our scouts returned and informed us that they had discovered a negro town upon the banks of a river that descended from the mountains. Oumar ordered me to approach it as nearly as I could, and to find out, if possible, whether it was fortified, and what might be the number of inhabitants. A scout offered

me his company, but I preferred to go alone as soon as I had been told the direction of the town. Stripping myself naked, with a cloth round my loins, and a spear in my hand, I crawled through the forest, choosing the thickest parts, as if I was stalking game, until I found myself on the banks of the river and close to the town. Canoes frequently passed me; they were chiefly plied by women, and were filled with plantains and with fruits which I had never seen before. The sound of voices guided me on; and as soon as I could see the green leaves of the plantains and the smoke rising above them, I climbed up a high tree whence I could clearly view the town. It was not like those of my own country. It was encircled by no walls; there was no open square in the centre, and it consisted of one long street. The houses were built not of clay but of wood; they were not round in shape but square; and the roofs, which with us are pyramidal in shape, were on an inclined plane.

I sat there till it was almost dark. It was a beautiful sight. The blue river rippling gently past and lapping the grassy banks; the palm trees bending gracefully forwards as if to look at themselves in the stream; the sun sinking in a green lake of foliage; and the town itself embedded in the broad-leaved plantains, and mottled by shadows from the tall forest trees.

Now came canoes every moment to the landing-place with men carrying fish strung on long stems of grass, and women bearing loads of firewood or fruit

upon their heads. From the forest came the hunters one by one, armed with spears or bows and arrows; some of them had killed monkeys and gazelles. Each man as he arrived was saluted by his friends, who placed their hands upon his breast. And now the women were all busy preparing the evening meal: some ran down to the river to fill their clay pitchers; others with their arms full of wood made up fires in their houses. They uttered loud cries and spoke in a language which I did not understand, and sang and danced and embraced one another as they worked. Never had I seen a people so noisy and so affectionate. I continued to watch them till the last ray of light died away, and then crept back to the encampment.

We made short work of this village. Before it was light we galloped into the street, placed a guard on the canoes, set fire to the houses, and attacked the people as they came out. Some of them escaped into the forest; others were taken prisoners. They agreed at once to become true believers, and to guide us to the city of the Golden King.

But these perfidious people (may they be for ever cursed) led us astray in the mighty forest, and buried us in quagmires. Some of them loosed their bonds in the night and made off; others flung themselves into the rivers; others we killed, and they sang the death-song with laughter as they stretched out their necks to the sword. We marched and marched in eternal twilight, for the forest was like a covered house, and

we seldom saw the sky. The rainy season now came on; fever broke out among us; our provisions were exhausted. One by one the horses were killed for food, till Oumar's grey Arab mare alone was left. The Pilgrim loved her as other men love their wives; he passed hours in caressing her and in singing to her in the Arabic tongue, which she seemed to understand. When he heard the murmuring of voices and saw the hungry eyes of the men, he gave the order for her death. He made her lie down, and then, passing his arms round her neck, placed his lips upon her velvet nostrils, and cutting some hairs from her mane thrust them in his breast. When I drew my knife he shuddered and said, 'Not you! not you! I should hate you for ever afterwards.'

At last we fell upon footpaths; we were again in the neighbourhood of men. But when we came to the plantation or the town, we found that houses and crops had been burnt. The famine increased, and men died every day; some took the earth of the ant-heaps and devoured it to appease the cravings of the stomach.

And now we found that our movements were observed; the forest was alive with warriors whom we could never see. At night, when the darkness descended on the forest, yells and shrieks rose all around, and arrows flew into our camp: we dared not light fires; we shivered all the night with the wet and cold. Those who were struck by the arrows were soon seized with a violent

thirst, and as soon as they drank they died, the blood bursting from their mouths and ears.

By day as we marched, men fell into pits and were impaled; others trod on splints that were poisoned like the arrows; and on others fell logs of wood from the trees.

However, it was evident that we were approaching the city of the Golden King; we saw the holes which had been used by the miners; the paths were frequent; and every day we passed villages and plantations, all of them in ashes.

Our leader continually assured us that our only hope was in reaching the town; the natives would then be forced to give us battle, and though we were weakened in strength and diminished in numbers, we should yet be able to put them to the rout. We all saw it was impossible to retreat, and pushed on as quickly as we could. One evening we arrived at a small conical rocky hill. On this we encamped, and for the first time for many nights no arrows fell among us; no corpses met our eyes when the dawn appeared.

We descended the hill, and entered the path towards the west. But now flames flashed on all sides; the wood was filled with thunder and smoke, and men dropped as if stricken by an unseen hand. 'O Solima,' said Oumar, 'we are lost! God has given to these people the weapons of the white men!'

We retreated to the hill; the enemy came forth. We now saw that we were surrounded by thousands of

negroes, naked and painted, carrying hollow tubes in their hands. The day passed, and the night. We saw their camp fires all around, like one continuous flame.

Mustapha was a native of an adjoining country, and could make himself understood to these people, as he had discovered by speaking to the prisoners.

Next morning, instructed by Oumar, I took him to the enemy's camp, and we were courteously received by the captain of the blacks. I confessed that we saw resistance to be useless; but at least we could die with our arms in our hands, and we should not die alone. If they would give us a few provisions, and let us go in peace, we would then return to our land without doing any more harm.

The captain said it was not in his power to grant our request. His orders from the king were these: to bring alive as many of us as he could, but to kill all if we stubbornly resisted. I asked him if he would promise us our lives. He replied that great kings often showed mercy; he could say no more.

We returned to Oumar, who privately consulted with Mustapha, and then sent us back to say that his men would leave their weapons on the hill and give themselves up, if the captain promised that none of us should be bound, or in any way ill-used, before our arrival in the town. To this the captain assented; and all that he did was to separate us from one another, and to place six guards over each man. Thus we were led into the city, which was close at hand.

We were taken through the streets, which were thronged with people, to the palace of the king. It was a cluster of buildings surrounded by three palisades. In each palisade was a gate, and at each of these gates the captain of the army took off a garment, and crawled in before us naked to an inner apartment. We were ordered to follow, and beheld before us a curtain, and behind it something dark, like the outline of a human form. The captain prostrated himself upon the ground, and cast dust upon his body. A naked foot was protruded from underneath the curtain.

Then the captain spoke: 'O King, father of the people and ruler of the Golden Town, never-eating, never-drinking, never-sleeping, never-dying King! these people, some of whom you see, belong to a rash and ignorant race dwelling beyond the Green Mountains; and they believed that it was possible to conquer your land, which has no beginning and which has no end, which the swiftest birds cannot traverse in their flight, the inhabitants of which are more numerous than the trees in the forest, and their children more numerous than the leaves upon the trees. But a few only of the soldiers went forth. Some of these people they have slain, and the rest they have driven in like goats.'

The foot disappeared, and we were taken back to an outer apartment of the palace, where the priests and nobles were assembled. They privately conferred a little while; then a crier arose and proclaimed one by

one the names of those people who should take us to their houses, and who should be answerable for us with their lives. They then called us to follow them, each one taking the Foula billeted upon him. Mustapha only was ordered to remain. Oumar told him to answer all their questions, and to speak the truth.

We were detained in the town, but were not chained or confined, or beaten or abused; twice a day we received plantains and cassada cooked in palm oil, and, as if we were guests, they offered us girls, for such is the shameful custom of the country. While some of the Foulas fasted and prayed, and sang verses of the Koran, others delivered themselves up to pleasure. We could see these unfortunate men sitting before their hut doors, drinking palm-wine, with their arms round the waists of the women, crowning themselves with garlands and singing blasphemous songs. 'The sun is shining, O Foulas!' they sang; 'the sun is shining, and the earth is sweet. O let us make merry, for the night is at hand.'

Not a day passed without bringing new comers to the town. So great was the influx of strangers, that soon a large town of huts was erected outside. When we asked what these people had come for, some of the natives replied that a feast was about to be held in honour of the King.

I passed every day with the Pilgrim, for no restraint was placed upon our actions; it was only forbidden that we should go outside the town. I found him one day with

Mustapha, who was weeping, and whose tears Oumar wiped away with his robe. When I entered he grasped me by the hand.

'To-day,' he said, 'the great feast is to be held, and our bodies will be offered to the Demons. But the king has decreed that twelve men shall be spared, and conducted back to the Mandingo frontier, in order that they may tell the Foulas of the fate which we have suffered, and explain to them the power of the Golden King. Of these men, Solima, you are one.'

'And you, my father?' I said.

He glanced with compassion at Mustapha. 'It is just that I should die,' said he; 'it is what I ardently desire. I hope that my sufferings may expiate my sins. Now listen to what I have to say. You are a man of a restless heart, hungering and thirsting after knowledge; the Foula country is too small for you. I will place it in your power to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, and to visit the tomb of the prophet at Medina; to see Cairo and Istamboul, and even to travel in the west, and to study the learning of the Christians. But first stay three months with your mother; and wherever you may go, desert not your God, and listen not to the words of philosophers and magicians.

'When you have returned to Ghadima, go out in the night-time by the western gate, and take the path into the forest. Three hundred paces in the wood is a tree blasted by the lightning. On the south side of this tree is a large stone; raise it up, and dig underneath. You

will find a bundle of cloth; it is filled with gold rings and with shining stones. Take the two largest of these stones; open your skin with a knife, and place them in the wound; the skin will grow over them, and they will be concealed. Hide the gold rings and the other stones as well as you can upon your person. The gold will enable you to travel to Bornou; there you can purchase a camel, and ride with the caravan which goes to Cairo once a year. When you come to Cairo, you will ask for a merchant named Abdullah Ben Ali. He will give you in money the value of the stones, and you will find that you are rich.'

I spoke again of himself, and again he interrupted me. 'God,' he cried, 'has rightly punished me for my presumption and hypocrisy. Instead of doing His holy work, my heart lusted after the wealth of this city. Deluded by the Arab tales, I believed that its roofs were of massive gold, and that its treasures could never be exhausted. When you have seen the riches of Cairo, you will smile as I do at the poverty of this miserable people.'

In order to turn his thoughts to happier days (as I supposed), I asked him where he had found these shining stones of which he had spoken. At this question he shuddered, and covered his face with his robe. Then, taking my hand, he said: 'Once, Solima, you confessed your life to me, and I reproved you for your sins. Ah, would that mine were no worse. I have sinned, Solima, —I have grievously sinned. And though I treasure

above all earthly things your reverence and your esteem, I will yield them up, for they are stolen. I have gained them by fraud. You know not what I am. O God, assist me to humble myself before this youth, and deprive me not wholly of his love.

'When I was fifteen years old, Solima, I was curious and restless, like yourself, desiring to see strange lands. A marabout passed through our village, on his way to Timbuctoo. He wanted a boy, and persuaded me to run away from home, promising to take me to the Holy City. I was overtaken, and brought back; but henceforth I could think of nothing but Mecca, the birthplace of the Prophet; and as soon as I became a man, I bade farewell to my relations, and took the road towards the East.

'I will not relate to you the sufferings I endured upon the way. Soon you also will learn what they are. I arrived safely at Mecca, and took up my abode in the Mosque. I gained enough to eat and drink by gathering firewood on the hills, and selling it through the streets.

'I had begun my travels from curiosity; but the company of holy men upon the road, and the Koran, which they had taught me to read, soon brought another feeling to my heart. I learned to love God. I passed days and days in an ecstasy of contemplation, touching neither food nor drink. Sometimes in the Mosque, when I had drunk of the water of Zem-zem, and kissed the Black Stone, I fell into a wondrous state. My body

seemed to be filled with air, so that I danced and sprang, and shrieked and wept, and often fell on the pavement in convulsions. Sometimes I would pass the day, crying, "*God is great! God is great!*" till another kind of frenzy seized me, and, stripping off my clothes, I ran through the town. I became celebrated as a saint, and people gave me money, with which I purchased an entrance into the Caaba itself; for, to the shame of the Meccans be it said, everything is shown for money; and pilgrims are esteemed, not for their piety, but for their wealth.

'But now I suddenly became rich. A pious Egyptian died in Mecca, and left me all his goods by will. At this time the character of my enthusiasm was changed. I purchased books, and studied them from morning till night. Henceforth I saw no visions, and left for ever the ecstatic state.

'One night I was reading a certain "Life of Mahommed," which contains an excellent description of the Arabs in the days of darkness, before the appearance of the Prophet. I was struck by the similarity which existed between them and the Foulas. Like the Foulas, they spoke one language, and believed in God; but were divided into petty clans, almost always at war, and were given up to idolatry. The idea flashed upon me that I should become the Mahommed of the Soudan, and combine the Foulas into a great nation, and restore the purity of the Moslem faith. I confided my plans to several pious Arabs who were acquainted with

the country, having dwelt at Kano, Kuka, or Timbuctoo. They replied that my project was not impracticable, but that it required money. I, therefore, began to consider how this money might be obtained.

'There is a certain people called the Persians, who claim to be Moslems, as the Foulas do, but who are little better than they; for they have cursed doctrines of their own contrary to the true faith. One of these men was in Mecca; he was enormously rich and ostentatious. He dressed himself in gorgeous apparel, and his hands were covered with precious stones. I persuaded myself that it would not be a sin to take these from him, and to employ them in my holy work. He was about to leave Mecca in the Cairo caravan.

'I had spent most of the money which had been left me by the Arab in purchasing books, and giving alms to poor pilgrims. The rest I distributed among certain evil and desperate tribes in the neighbourhood of Mecca. We arranged to attack the caravan as soon as it had left the holy ground; and they promised me that no one but the Persian should be robbed.

'But, alas! there was a battle. Many good and pious men were slain. The caravan was completely spoiled by my fierce allies; who then, to escape the vengeance of the Turkish Government, migrated across the Red Sea, and obtained the protection of an Abyssinian chief. With the riches that fell to my share I purchased camels and slaves, and journeyed to the Soudan; but a certain quantity of gold and the precious stones I carried with

me, so that if my projects failed I might be able to return to Cairo. The rest of my life you know.'

He ended, and cast a timid look upon me. I was about to throw myself into his arms, when his eyes dilated and became fixed. I looked behind me, and saw standing at the door a hideous being. He was naked, and his skin was of a reddish white, all sore, and cracked by the sun. His head was hairless, and his eyes were small and red, and flickered continually. Fantastic figures were drawn in charcoal on his breast, and in his hand he carried an enormous axe covered with the rust of blood. At the same moment there burst forth in the street outside screams and yells, and the beating of drums. The feast had begun. Oumar gave me his Koran; then his hands were tied.

The scene which followed is too horrible to be related. Even after all these years I cannot think of it without a shudder. Two hundred Foulas were beheaded by the Albino; but Oumar was tortured in the most shocking manner throughout the whole day. When life was almost extinct, the king called for Mustapha. He was dressed in the robes worn by the king's servants; his life had been spared because he was a blind man, and a negro. The king gave him a knife, and ordered him to kill his master. Oumar told him to obey. It was his last command. Mustapha approached him. The Pilgrim sank upon his knees and raised towards heaven his bound and bleeding hands. Mustapha stabbed him, and then fell upon

the mutilated corpse. When they raised him, they found that the knife was buried in his own breast.

This was the end; the negroes silently dispersed, and the next day the town had resumed its ordinary aspect. These people who, maddened by fury and drink, had resembled demons rather than men, were now as soft and gentle in their manners as before. They never spoke of our murdered comrades, and treated us with a kindness which was almost anxious; the women as they brought us food looked at us with tender and sympathising eyes. We were detained till the rainy season was over and the waters had abated. We were then escorted to the frontier; we passed the ashes of the villages which had been destroyed, but the negroes made no remarks, and when we parted from them they pressed our hands in theirs, and provided us with food for the journey across the desolate land.

We passed through it without harm, though much terrified by the roaring of wild beasts. When we saw the red walls of the first Mandingo town and the conical roofs above them, and the cotton trees rising like green towers, we embraced one another and wept with joy.

We then parted and went on our various ways. When I entered the well-known fields which encircled Ghadima, I sat down by the path and covered my head with my soiled and ragged robe.

Presently I heard the sound of a flute. Then the hot blood came to my forehead, for I knew it was Fatima. The high grass parted, and she came towards

me with the reed to her lips and her eyes on the ground. As I looked at her I saw that she was changed. She was stouter and coarse-looking ; her hair, though covered with rich ornaments, was less carefully dressed than of yore, and the white band of the virgin was no longer on her brow.

'Fatima!' said I.

She raised her eyes, started back, and gave a shriek. She sprang forward, but checked herself; paused and said almost calmly,

'Is it, indeed, you, Solima? We all thought that you were dead. Are any men saved from Ghadima?'

'Not one,' I replied.

We were both silent, and glanced at each other furtively. Then we heard footsteps.

'That is my husband,' she said quickly, and cried out at the top of her voice, 'Master, master, come here.'

It was the young shepherd whom I had seen with Fatima in the town square on the day of the divorce. He offered me his hand in a friendly manner, and we all sat down together. I related the history of our expedition. They asked me to go with them to the town and to stay with them there awhile. But I had no desire to be the messenger of evil tidings. Besides, whenever Fatima caught my eye she would throw her arms round her husband's neck, or place her hand upon his breast. This parade of an affection which probably was not sincere, wounded and disgusted me. I left them, saying I would go on to Missera at once

When the night came I went to the dead tree as the Pilgrim had directed, lifted up the stone, and found the treasure. I then tore down some branches and made a bed upon the ground. At daybreak I started to go home.

I passed through those meadows and groves which three times in my life I had passed before—twice in victory—once in sorrow—and now almost in despair. It was not at such a time as this, exhausted by hunger and fatigue, that I could think with pleasure of wandering forth upon the world. I longed for repose and tranquillity and peace.

I avoided the plantation villages, and when I heard people coming along the road hid myself among the bushes till they were gone. As I drew nearer and nearer to the town I slackened my pace, and lingered by the way. I felt my heart sink. Three other men from Missera besides myself had joined the army of the Pilgrim, but they were dead. I saw the Mami and the grey-bearded elders receiving me coldly and gravely in the council-house: I saw the widows and the fatherless mourning for the lost ones, and looking with envy on him who had escaped: I saw the marabout with his taunting smile; and my mother, she from whom I should hope for pity and protection, would not she avenge herself for all that I had made her suffer?

When I entered the jungle in which I had passed the happiest days of my boyhood, I left the beaten path and loitered through the trees towards the town. The

air was laden with memories; every object was a recollection. I wandered on in a dream, no longer living in the present but the past.

While looking vacantly before me something that was new and unaccustomed met my eyes. It was a small hut. I thought at first it was one of those hovels which the huntsmen build in the rainy season to shelter them during the night. But when I came nearer I saw that it was neatly constructed, and that close to it was a little patch of garden ground planted with millet and rice. Before the door was a pestle and mortar and a hoe. Stooping my head, I entered the cottage, and saw a mat upon the ground, and at its head a leathern pillow. In one corner was a large earthen jar of unbaked clay, and a calabash covering its mouth; in the middle was a smouldering fire of green wood, and a hatchet beside it on the ground. A clay pot, two wooden spoons, and a stool completed the simple furniture.

It was evident that this hut was a real dwelling-place, and that its inmate was not far away. But who among the affectionate and sociable Foulas could have determined to live like a wild beast in the jungle? Never had such a thing been heard of before. I examined the soil round the cottage with as much care as if I had been searching for a trail. I found always the same footprint; and I was still more astonished when I saw from its shape and size it was a woman's. My curiosity

was roused. I resolved to remain till she returned, and sitting down on a stone by the door I watched the little path scarcely larger than an antelope's, which her feet had trodden out in the wood.

The sun sank low behind the trees, and still the mistress of the hut did not return. It became dusk. Grey clouds like spectres swept across the sky: strange shadows waved around me; from the deep forest rose melancholy cries. The wind moaned among the branches, and the dark night came down. At such an hour as this, when the air is cold and keen, the Foulas love to crouch around their fires, and to tell of genii and the spirits of the dead. And as I thus sat waiting for I knew not whom the most fearful of these narratives came back upon my mind. I tried to shake off these horrors: I murmured verses of the Koran; but every sound that I heard resembled a hollow and unearthly voice. I thought I saw forms moving through the trees; the forest frightened me; I ran back into the hut, and stirred the fire to a flame. It blazed up and lighted the hut; then I heard a rustle, and looking over my shoulders beheld a frightful apparition. A tall figure stood within the door; it was dressed entirely in white; its face was covered with a thick veil or mask with two holes left for the eyes. I shrieked with fear; and raising a flaming brand, I sprang upon the spirit. Then I dropped it, and staggered back. I had recognised the eyes. It was my mother.

She pulled down her veil and clasped me in her

arms. Long, long we remained thus embracing each other, and uttering inarticulate cries of joy.

Then she cooked some rice, and we ate together, having said the word Bismillah. We united in the evening prayer, and she explained the mystery of her appearance. When the Pilgrim had returned that night she had fallen on her knees, and had prayed him to give her a charm to regain my love. He had said that if she would follow his instructions he would give her that, and even more. He had then spoken of her crime, and had explained that her sufferings were a punishment from God. He had directed her how she should live to obtain the forgiveness of her Maker, and had placed her in the charge of a marabout, a truly pious man, whom sickness had prevented from following the army. He had taught her the prayers and the required rites, and had made for her a dress such as that which is worn by the wives of the faithful in Mecca and the cities of the East. This was the last labour of his hands, and he died exhorting her to obey the commands of the Pilgrim and to remain faithful to her God.

But when she returned to Missera, wearing the yashmak or veil, the women cried out savagely against her, and the marabout, her old enemy, persuaded the Mami to drive her from the town. She had built this hut, and planted the garden with the assistance of her slaves, whom she had then set free; and here she had remained, supplying her own frugal wants, and passing her days in prayer.

The next day the sun shone brightly; we went into the forest and sat beneath the trees. How sweet was the scene! What calm and holy feelings entered my breast! What joy to receive my mother's caresses, and to hear the fond names which she had given me in childhood! 'Here, dearest mother,' said I, 'we shall always reside. Never, never will I part from you again.'

Her countenance became troubled, and her eyes floated in tears.

'What was it you said last night, Solima? Did not the Pilgrim tell you to stay with me three months, and then to journey on to Mecca and Medina?'

'Enough I have wandered, dear mother,' said I. 'God dwelleth not in Mecca alone. Here I can live with you a pious and a godly life.'

She shook her head mournfully, and answered, 'Your sins were but small, and they have been forgiven; but I have committed an abominable crime, for which a whole life of penance is insufficient to atone. But I put my trust in the mercy of God. Stay with me these three months; it is a greater happiness than I deserve.'

I gave her the Koran which I had received from Oumar, and taught her to read it, that she might have a counsellor and friend. It was thus we passed the days. In the evening we often spoke about Oumar, and I repeated his holy and beautiful sayings. Once only I alluded to his crime, and lamented that even he

had committed so great a sin, and had received a punishment so terrible.

But my mother would not listen to these words. 'He is my Saviour,' she cried; 'he has rescued my soul from the hands of the Evil One. And out of all those that perished, did he not preserve you to me by his prayers? Nay, nay, Solima, when Oumar died it was not as a punishment but a reward. For in this life there is care, and sorrow, and pain; alas! I know it well; but in the next life is eternal joy.'

I write these words in the great city of the West. Many years, many years I have sojourned amongst strangers, who scoff at my faith, and even at their own. Cold-blooded, sneering, stony-hearted men, ponder a moment on this which you have read. What was this ardent and elevating Faith, which made that poor sinful woman's life one long, piteous, ever-tearful prayer. Those countless supplications which she offered up before she died—those days and nights of solitude and pain—were they all wasted on the air?

O doleful and melancholy day, when I parted from my mother, never again to see her upon earth! O dolorous dawn! heart-breaking hour! She gave me my shroud, without which no Moslem travels! I have it before me now; and soon it will wrap these aged and emaciated limbs.

Again and again we said farewell. We parted and returned once more, to fall into each other's arms. All day I wandered in the jungle; at evening I

crept near the cottage, and climbed up a tree. I saw her come out. The veil covered her face; never more would it be raised again. She stooped upon the ground, and gathered some grass I had trodden with my feet. Then I cried with anguish, and placing my bundle on my head, journeyed by moonlight on the road towards the East.

THE PIONEERS OF DISCOVERY IN AFRICA

Scale of English Miles

THE AFRICAN PIONEERS

In this chapter I shall describe how a few heroic men, animated by a spirit of the purest chivalry, laid open Central Africa, that extraordinary land which has been explored without intermission for a hundred years, and which still can offer something new.

A hundred years ago Shaw had examined the monuments of Barbary, and Bruce had drunk to his sweetheart from the sources of the Nile, as he supposed; but of Negroland itself—the true Africa—little was known beyond the coast. The best maps of the day were based on those of Ptolemy and Edrisi; the most reliable authority was Leo Africanus, a Morisco of Granada.

When Herodotus was at Memphis in Egypt taking notes on his wooden tablets, he heard of a great river beyond the sandy Sahara, flowing from west to east, and conjectured that it was a tributary of the Nile. At a later date this river obtained an appellation of its own, but Greeks and Romans still believed that the so-called Niger joined with its waters the Egyptian stream. Thus Æschylus in his 'Prometheus Unbound:'

> Avoid the Arismanian troops,
> Approach them not, but seek
> A land far distant where the tawny race
> Dwell near the fountains of the sun, and where

> The Niger pours his dusky waters; wind
> Along his banks till thou shalt reach the fall,
> Where from the mountains with papyrus crown'd
> The venerable Nile impetuous pours
> His headlong torrent.

Ptolemy divided the two rivers; but while his map of the White Nile has anticipated modern explorations, his map of the Niger served only to mislead geographers.

Arab travellers visited the Niger, yet Edrisi asserted that the river flowed towards the west. Many modern geographers maintained that the Senegal was the mouth of the Niger; and the French, to whom the Senegal belonged, were much attached to this hypothesis. Others preferred to follow Herodotus and Pliny; and thus two parties arose, which hated each other with the usual ferocity of scientific sects. But in this, at least, they were agreed, that it would be an excellent thing if some one would visit the river, and settle the dispute by ocular inspection.

Now the close of the eighteenth century was the very time for such an undertaking. The great voyage of Captain Cook had excited a taste for expeditions of adventure. The ocean had been conquered, except at the Poles; and hungry eyes were now being cast on the barren places of the map, which geographers, abhorring a vacuum, had industriously stocked with elephants and lions. Chief among the new enthusiasts of travel was Sir Joseph Banks, who, in spite of a large fortune, endured the hardships of exploration, and devoted his

life faithfully to science. He felt that the state of African geography was a stigma on the age. Here was a mighty river, and no one knew where it rose, where it terminated, or even the direction in which it flowed; yet great cities were said to exist upon its banks, and masted vessels swam upon its waters.

So Sir Joseph founded The African Association, which may be considered the earliest Geographical Society in Europe. *To find and follow the Niger* was the task which it first took up, and for many years steadily pursued, till at length its labours were crowned with success.

The first emissary of the Association did nothing in African travel, but he died on African soil; and his life is so strange, and his character so noble, that he should not be omitted from the list of pioneers.

John Ledyard was the son of a sea-captain in New England, and not liking the law, to which he had been bred by his parents, entered a missionary college for the conversion of Red Indians, established in Hanover, New Hampshire, amidst the wild forests which then clothed the banks of the Connecticut River. As if fascinated by the wilderness, he ran away to savage life, and wandered among the Six Nations to the borders of Canada. He returned to his studies for a short time, but his passion for adventure seized him again. He cut down a tree, and dug it out into a canoe, fifty feet long and three wide. With a bear-skin

for his covering, and a Greek Testament and an Ovid for his companions, he floated down the river to Hartford, where he had relations. This was a true exploring voyage of a hundred and thirty miles, and exceedingly dangerous on account of the rapids. He was then only nineteen years of age.

Giving up the idea of the church, he sailed as seaman from New London to Gibraltar. There he disappeared, and was discovered by his captain in the red coat and black gaiters which shortly afterwards became the targets of American militia. He had enlisted as a soldier, but the captain procured his release, and he returned home without further misadventure.

Next he worked his passage from New York to London, to discover the rich and noble family from which he was descended; a favourite pursuit of colonists at that time, and hardly altogether obsolete. He was not received with open arms by the Ledyards of London; and hearing that Captain Cook was about to sail on his third and last great voyage, enlisted in the marines, that he might be qualified to volunteer. He obtained an interview with Cook, who consented to take him, and made him a corporal, and employed him during the voyage on various trips of exploration.

Having vainly endeavoured to get up an American fur-trading expedition, he came again to London, and visited Sir Joseph Banks, with a project for crossing America from the Pacific to the Atlantic. Sir Joseph gave him some money, and he then determined to go

overland to Kamschatka, whence to the north-west coast of America a passage could be easily obtained in some trading vessel. With ten guineas in his pocket he started to cross two continents. He went over to Ostend, and thence to the capital of Sweden *viâ* Denmark and the Sound. He attempted to cross the Gulf of Bothnia on the ice, by way of a short cut to Kamschatka; but when he came to the middle he found that the waters were not frozen, and accordingly returned to Stockholm; and walking into the Arctic Circle, went round the head of the Gulf, and descended on its eastern side to St. Petersburgh. There he was soon noticed as an extraordinary man. Without shoes or stockings, he was invited to dinner by the Portuguese Ambassador, and went. He drew a bill on Sir Joseph for twenty guineas, and obtained permission from the Government to accompany a detachment of stores which were being sent to Yakutz, in Siberia, a distance of six thousand miles. From Yakutz he went on to the coast, to procure a passage across to America; but the ice being about, he was obliged to return and wait for the termination of the winter. Such was his situation when he was seized, in the name of the Empress, by two soldiers, who placed him in a sledge, and conveyed him in the depth of winter through the deserts of Northern Tartary and the Russian Steppes, and left him at last on the Polish frontier. They told him that if he returned to Russia he would certainly be hanged; but if he chose to go back to England, they wished him a pleasant journey.

It is probable that commercial jealousy on the part of the fur-traders was the cause of this arbitrary act. Be that as it may, Ledyard's project of exploration was at an end. In the midst of poverty, covered with rags, worn by hardship, exhausted by disease, without friends, without credit, unknown, and full of misery, he found his way to Konigsberg. There he drew another bill for five guineas on Sir Joseph Banks, and returned to London.

The question now will suggest itself to the reader, How, with so little money, did he manage to go so far? 'All that I have learned from him,' writes Mr. Beaufoy, the Secretary of the Association, 'on this subject was, that his sufferings were excessive; and that more than once he owed his life to the compassionate temper of women.' It was during this journey he composed his famous eulogy on the sex.

'I have observed among all nations,' says he, 'that the women ornament themselves more than the men; that wherever found, they are the same kind, civil, obliging, humane, tender beings; that they are ever inclined to be gay and cheerful, timorous and modest. They do not hesitate, like man, to perform a hospitable or generous action; not haughty, nor arrogant, nor supercilious, but full of courtesy, and fond of society; industrious, economical, ingenious; more liable in general to err than man, but in general, also, more virtuous, and performing more good actions than he. I never addressed myself in the language of decency and friendship to a

woman, whether civilised or savage, without receiving a decent and friendly answer. With men it has been often otherwise. In wandering over the barren plains of inhospitable Denmark, through honest Sweden, frozen Lapland, rude and churlish Finland, unprincipled Russia, and the wide-spread regions of the wandering Tartar, if hungry, dry, cold, wet, or sick, woman has ever been friendly to me, and uniformly so; and to add to this virtue, so worthy of the appellation of benevolent, these actions have been performed in so free and so kind a manner, that if I was dry I drank the sweet draught, and if hungry ate the coarse morsel with a double relish.'

He called upon Sir Joseph, who had duly honoured his drafts, and who said he believed he could recommend him to an adventure almost as perilous as the one from which he had returned. How would he like to go across Africa from Cairo and Sennaar, in the supposed latitude of the Niger? Ledyard replied that he had always intended to cross Africa after he had crossed America. Sir Joseph gave him a letter to Mr. Beaufoy, who, before he knew the business of his visitor, was struck with the manliness of his person, the breadth of his chest, the openness of his countenance, and the inquietude of his eye. The matter having been discussed, Mr. Beaufoy asked him when he would be ready to start, and he said, '*To-morrow morning.*' No time, in fact, was lost. The Association was founded early in June, and Ledyard started for Cairo before the end of the month.

'I am accustomed,' said he, in his last conversation with Mr. Beaufoy, on the morning of his departure, 'I am accustomed to hardships. I have know both hunger and nakedness, to the utmost extremity of human suffering. I have known what it is to have food given me as charity to a madman; and I have at times been obliged to shelter myself under the miseries of that character to avoid a heavier calamity. My distresses have been greater than I have ever owned, or ever will own, to any man. Such evils are terrible to bear; but they never yet had power to turn me from my purpose. If I live, I will faithfully perform, in its utmost extent, my engagement to the society; and, if I perish in the attempt, my honour will be safe, for death cancels all bonds.'

He was detained a considerable time at Cairo, waiting for the departure of the Sennaar caravan; and died of a bilious fever, which he treated with violent medicines. The last letter which he wrote was to Jefferson at Paris.[1]

Almost at the same time, a Mr. Lucas was sent by the Association to Tripoli, that he might penetrate into Central Africa by Fezzan and the Sahara route; but a rebellion of the wandering Arab tribes prevented him from travelling inland.

The fame of the African Association had already spread over Europe, and Hornemann, a pupil of Professors Blumenbach, Heeren, and Heyne, came over to

[1] 'Life of Ledyard,' by Jared Sparks. Proceedings of the African Association.

England as a volunteer. He was sent to Cairo, and arrived there just before the French, was imprisoned by the Mamelukes, but soon liberated by the men of science attached to the expedition, and taken to General Buonaparte, who offered him money and assistance, gave him passports, and forwarded his letters to the Association, under his own seal. Hornemann made an excellent journey from Cairo to Fezzan, by a route which had been used before the days of Herodotus, and which the Father of History describes. Hornemann then set off across the Desert for Bornou, and was never heard of again.

Central Africa had thus been attacked from two points, Tripoli and Cairo; but Negroland had not yet been reached. The next attempt was made from the Western Coast. Major Houghton, who had served at Goree, volunteered to conduct an expedition to the Niger and Timbuctoo, of which city and its golden roofs the strangest accounts had been received from the negroes and the Arabs. He passed through Bambouk, the farthest country which had been previously reached by Europeans; but fell into the power of the Sahara Moors, was robbed of all that he possessed, and left naked and alone to die.

The next geographical missionary who appears upon our list narrowly escaped a similar fate, but returned in safety to England, to charm all Europe with the narrative of his adventures. MUNGO PARK (born 1771) was the son of a Scotch farmer, and received his

education at the grammar school of Selkirk, where he was remarked as a silent, studious, and thoughtful boy. His father wished him to enter the church, but he preferred the medical profession, was bound an apprentice to a Mr. Anderson at Selkirk, and remained with him three years. In 1789 he went to the University at Edinburgh, and in due course obtained his diploma. He took a liking to botany, and made a tour in the Highlands with his brother-in-law, Mr. J. Dickson, who was proficient in that science. He then went to London in search of employment, and was introduced by Dickson to Sir Joseph Banks, who procured him the appointment of assistant-surgeon on board the 'Worcester,' an East Indiaman. In the course of his voyage he collected botanical and zoological specimens, and when he came home read a paper before the Linnæan Society on eight new fishes from Sumatra.[1] Sir Joseph suggested to him an African career, and he entered the service of the Association. He had hopes when he took this step that he would make himself more famous than any man who had gone before him;[2] and he was not disappointed.

[1] 'Linnæan Transactions,' vol. iii. p. 33, Nov. 4, 1794.

[2] 'The "Worcester" and the other three ships are to go out this season, but as the same surgeons go in them there is no preferment. I have, however, got Sir Joseph's word that if I wish to travel he will apply to the African Association, and I shall go with their Consul to Fort St. Joseph, on the River Gambia, where I am to hire a trader to go with me to Timbuctoo and back again.

'The Association pays for everything, and they allow 200 guineas to the

His instructions were to start for the Gambia, and to look for the Niger and Timbuctoo. He sailed to Bathurst in a trading vessel, and ascended the river to Pisania, where Dr. Laidley, a friend of Houghton, had a factory. With this excellent and hospitable man Park resided several months, and studied the Mandingo language, which is spoken over a large area, and which, in the countries between the Senegal and Niger, is gradually extending its dominion. He then engaged a negro named Johnson, who could speak English, and Dr. Laidley also gave him a boy called Demba. Having purchased a horse and two donkeys, with a small assortment of beads, amber, and tobacco, he started for Bambara, which country was traversed by the Niger, or Joliba (the Great River), according to the statements of the natives.

The region which lay upon his path belonged to various independent chiefs, who, like the barons of the middle ages, obtained a living from the passing caravans or companies of traders, who went down to the coast with slaves, ivory, and gold dust, and returned with salt,

trader who goes as my guide and interpreter, when we return to Fort St. Joseph. I shall write more particularly in my next; but it is a short expedition, and will give me an opportunity of coming to Scotland before I set off, besides the hope of distinguishing myself—for if I succeed I shall acquire a greater name than any ever did, and at present I see no reason against my accepting it—write soon.

'I am, dear brother, yours,

London: May 20, 1794. 'MUNGO PARK.'

Extract of an unpublished letter in the possession of J. B. Maxton, Esq. of 4 Sun Street, Finsbury.

powder, muskets, and cotton goods. The leaders of these caravans had to pay for their food and lodging, for the use of wells, for bridges or ferries, and for the right of way. In some districts there was a regular tariff, but more frequently a present was made to the chief by the travelling merchants, according to their wealth. If the present was not deemed sufficient, it was politely returned, locks were placed on the wells, and the travellers detained until they had made it more. But if they were unable to pay their expenses, a part of their goods, or, if they had none, some of their slaves, would be seized.

As Mungo Park was a white man, the chiefs of the countries through which he passed expected larger payments than usual; and, as he was a poor man, they were disappointed. It is not therefore surprising that the strong hand of the law was put into force against him. The officers of the king of Bondou took half his goods, and another chieftain appropriated half of the remainder. When he arrived in Kaarta he had very little left. But now he was close to Bambara, and hoped soon to reach the banks of the Niger.

But it so happened that the road was stopped by a native war. The King of Bambara had sent a message to the King of Kaarta, saying that in the course of the dry season he intended to visit Kemmoo (the capital of Kaarta) with nine thousand men, and desired that he would direct his slaves to sweep the houses and have everything ready for their accommodation. The envoy

concluded his message by presenting the king with a pair of iron sandals, and said that until he had worn them out in flight, he would never be secure from the arrows of Bambara.

The King of Kaarta would not allow Park to pass on to the Niger direct; but said that he might go to Ludamar, a Moorish province which belonged to his friend Ali, and thence, with Ali's permission, could pass on to Segou, the capital of Bambara.

Ludamar was a tract of land situated on the borders of the Desert, and taken from the negroes by a tribe of Moors, who dwelt partly in tents and partly in the towns of the people they had conquered. They were mulattoes, resembling those of the West Indies, but with a peculiar vindictive expression and wild staring eyes, which made them look like a nation of lunatics. In the negro countries through which he had travelled, Park had suffered from extortion, but had always been robbed in a civil way. With the Moors it was a very different affair. They detested and despised the Christians, of whom they knew nothing, and whom they ranked with the Pagan blacks. In Jarra, the first town of Ludamar, the population was chiefly negro, and Park was not troubled by the Moors. He took up his abode with a Gambia slave-trader, an acquaintance of Dr. Laidley, and sent a present to Ali, the Moorish chief, who was encamped at Benown, requesting permission to pass through to Bambara. In a fortnight one of Ali's slaves returned with a favourable reply. He had orders,

he said, to escort Park through Ludamar to Goomba on the Bambara frontier. Johnson would not venture among the Moors, and Park gave him his papers to take back to the Gambia. The boy Demba consented to go on, and the slave-trader lent him a man.

They travelled from Jarra to Deena, a large town filled with Moors, who now displayed their amiable character. Gathering round the hut of the negro where Park was lodged, they hissed, shouted, and abused him, and even spat in his face, with a view to irritate him, and afford them a pretext for seizing his baggage. But finding such insults had not the desired effect, they had recourse to the final and decisive argument, that as he was a Christian, his property was therefore a lawful plunder to the disciples of Mahommed. They accordingly opened his bundles, and took whatever they fancied. His attendants finding that every one could rob him with impunity, determined to go back, and Park mounting his horse went on alone. He started at two o'clock in the morning, and had ridden in the moonlight about half a mile, when he heard a halloo behind him, and on looking round saw his boy Demba running after him. Ali's messenger, he said, had gone back to the camp, and the slave-trader's negro, he thought, might be persuaded to come on, if Park would consent to wait a little while. Accordingly he waited, and in about an hour Demba returned with the negro. They journeyed on through Ludamar, and were not far from the Bambara frontier, when a party of Moors overtook

them, and said they had orders to take Mungo Park to the camp, as Fatima, Ali's wife, wanted to look at a Christian. The negro from Jarra ran away. Park and Demba were carried off together, and in five days arrived at the camp.

It presented to the eye a great number of dirty-looking tents, scattered without order over a considerable space of ground, and among these tents appeared large herds of camels, cattle, and goats. Park's arrival was no sooner observed than the people who drew water at the wells threw down their buckets, those in the tents mounted their horses, and men, women, and children came running or galloping towards him. Surrounded by such a crowd that he could scarcely move, he at last reached the chief's tent. Ali was seated on a black leathern cushion clipping a few hairs from his upper lip, while a female attendant held up a looking glass before him. He was an old man, of the Arab cast, with a long white beard, and had a sullen and malignant aspect. He surveyed Park with some attention, and enquired of the Moors if he could speak Arabic. Being answered in the negative, he appeared much surprised, and continued silent. The ladies, however, were more inquisitive; they asked a thousand questions, inspected every part of his apparel, searched his pockets, made him unbutton his waistcoat to show the whiteness of his skin, and even counted his toes and fingers, as if they doubted whether he was in truth a human being.

The Moor, who acted as interpreter, now informed

Park that Ali was about to give him something to eat, and looking round he saw some boys bringing a wild hog, which they tied to one of the tent strings, and Ali made signs that Park should kill it and dress it for his supper. Though he felt very hungry he did not think it prudent to eat any part of an animal so much detested by the Moors. They then untied the hog in hopes that it would immediately run at him, for they suppose that the bitterest animosity exists between swine and Christians. In this, however, they were disappointed, for no sooner had the beast regained its liberty than it began to attack without discrimination every person that came in its way. Park and the hog were ultimately lodged together, and in the night a man creeping into the hut to steal something from the prisoner tumbled over the boar and was bitten in the face.

Fatima was absent from the camp, and Park was detained there a considerable time. He was appointed barber to Ali, but contrived to shave so badly, that he was deprived of his office, which was just what he wanted. He laid it down as a rule to make himself as insignificant and useless as he could, as the only means of recovering his liberty. Demba was employed to cut grass for the horses, and Johnson also made his appearance, having been arrested at Jarra and brought on to the camp.

Our traveller was much annoyed by the curiosity of the Moorish ladies, who kept him dressing and undressing, buttoning and unbuttoning, all day long; while the

men often galloped round him as if they were baiting a wild beast, twirling their muskets round their heads, and exhibiting feats of activity and horsemanship. A wedding took place in the camp, and an old woman entered the tent with a wooden bowl in her hand, signified that she had brought him a present from the bride, and flung the contents of the bowl full in his face. Finding that it was the same kind of holy water with which, among the Hottentots, a priest is said to sprinkle the newly-married couple, he began to remonstrate, but was earnestly assured that it was a complimentary gift, which was always received by young bachelors among the Moors as a distinguished favour. Accordingly he wiped his face and sent his acknowledgments to the lady. No one would infer from this curious custom that the Moors were delicate and prudish in their manners, but they considered Park's nankeen breeches exceedingly indecent, and made him cover himself with a robe when he entered the presence of ladies of rank.

Meanwhile the captives suffered terribly from hunger and thirst. Park describes hunger as at first a very painful sensation, but when it has continued for some time it is succeeded by debility and languor. Johnson and Demba passed the day stretched on the sand in a torpid slumber, from which even when the dish of cous-cous arrived Park found it difficult to wake them. But when Ali moved his camp further to the north, that is to say, nearer to the Desert, the heat became almost

insupportable; even the negroes, with their horny feet, could not pass at mid-day from one tent to another without putting on sandals, like people in a Turkish bath; water was scarce; day and night the wells were crowded with cattle, fighting to get at the troughs, or devouring the black moist mud from the gutters by the wells, which often proved fatal to them. Sometimes Park begged a little water from the negro slaves, and sometimes he drank like the cattle from the troughs.

Fatima came to the camp and showed Park more kindness than he had yet received; but he was still detained, though Ali had often promised that as soon as Fatima had seen him he should be allowed to go on to Bambara. The chief now took Demba as his own slave, and prepared to send him away. Park offered an angry remonstrance, whereupon Ali, with a haughty air and malignant smile, told the interpreter that if Park did not instantly mount his horse (for they were now going to Jarra) he would send him away likewise. But 'the old fool,' as they called Johnson, might stay with him if he pleased. The poor faithful boy came to Park to say farewell; they shook hands together and both of them cried; and they parted never to meet again.

At Jarra, Park returned to his old lodgings. Johnson was now free, and made arrangements for returning to the Gambia, but Park heard that he himself would be taken back to the camp. He therefore determined to effect his escape, not towards the Gambia, as ninety-

nine men out of a hundred would have done, but in the direction of the Niger.

About midnight he prepared his bundle, which consisted of two shirts, two pairs of trowsers, two pocket handkerchiefs, an upper and under waistcoat, a hat, a pair of half boots, and a cloak. He had not a single article of value to serve him as money. About day-break Johnson came to him and whispered that the Moors were all asleep. The awful crisis was now arrived when he was again either to taste the blessing of freedom or languish out his days in captivity. A cold sweat moistened his forehead as he thought on the dreadful alternative, and reflected that one way or the other his fate must be decided in the course of the ensuing day. But to deliberate was to lose the only chance of escaping; so taking up his bundle he stepped gently over the negroes who were sleeping in the open air, and mounting his horse, bade Johnson farewell, desiring him to take particular care of his papers, and to inform his friends at the Gambia that he had left him in good health on his way to Bambara.

He had ridden about two miles when he saw three Moors on horseback coming after him at full speed: they seized him and said he must go back to Ali. He prepared to accompany them with the indifference of despair; but they took him aside into some bushes, examined his bundle, robbed him of his cloak as the only article worth taking, and let him go. He turned

his horse's head again towards the east, and in three days arrived at the frontier town of Bambara.

The Bambara people took him for a Moor, and laughed much at him and at his horse, which the Moors had not deigned to take from him. 'He has been to Mecca,' said one, 'you may see that by his clothes.' Another enquired if his horse was sick. Another offered to purchase it. But he was now again among negroes, and was not interfered with.

On July 20, 1796, a day ever memorable in the annals of geography, Mungo Park arrived on the banks of the Niger; he found it a great river, broad as the Thames at Westminster, and flowing slowly to the eastward. He hastened to the brink, and having drunk of the water, lifted up his fervent thanks in prayer to the Great Ruler of all things for having thus far crowned his endeavours with success.

On the opposite side of the river was the great city of Segou. The King's slaves were taking over the people in crowds, and though the fare was only a halfpenny a-head, the revenue derived per annum from the ferry amounted to a considerable sum. The numerous canoes upon the river, the crowded population, and the cultivated state of the surrounding country, formed altogether a prospect of civilisation, which he little expected to find in the bosom of Africa.

But he was not allowed to enter Segou. The king having heard that a white man from the sea was coming over to pay him a visit, at once sent some of his people

to say that he could not possibly see Park till he knew what he had come for. The messenger told him he must not cross the river without permission, and advised him to pass the night in a village which, they showed him in the distance. He went off to this village, but found to his mortification that no one would admit him into a house. He was regarded with astonishment and fear, and obliged to sit all day without food in the shade of a large tree. Towards evening the wind rose, it began to rain, and there was every prospect of his passing an exceedingly uncomfortable night. But at sunset a woman returning from the labours of the field stopped to observe him, and perceiving he was weary and dejected, enquired into his situation, which he briefly explained; whereupon, with looks of great compassion, she took up his saddle and bridle, told him to follow her, and conducted him into her hut, where she lighted a lamp and spread a mat on the floor. She went out and returned in a short time with a very fine fish, which she broiled on the embers and gave him for his supper. He then lay down on his mat, while she with the other females of the family resumed their task of spinning cotton, in which they continued to employ themselves during a great part of the night. One of the young women sang a song, the rest joining in a chorus or refrain. The air was sweet and plaintive; and the words literally translated were these: *The winds roared and the rain fell. The poor white man faint and weary came and sat beneath our tree. He has no mother to bring*

him milk, no wife to grind his corn. Chorus. *Let us pity the poor white man; no mother has he to bring him milk, no wife to grind his corn.*

He was so oppressed by this unexpected kindness that sleep fled from his eyes. In the morning he gave his compassionate landlady two of the four brass buttons which remained on his waistcoat, the only compensation he could make her.

After two or three days the king sent him a present of five thousand cowries, and earnestly requested him to go away. Perhaps he feared that Park would bewitch him, or that he might not be able to protect a Christian from the Moors; or that he had come as a spy. It can hardly be supposed that the Bambara people would appreciate the objects which the African Association had in view. A native, when Park informed him that he had come from a great distance and through many dangers to look at the Joliba, enquired whether there were no rivers in his own country, and whether one river was not like another.

In accordance with the instructions which he had received, Mungo Park started for Timbuctoo. He went down the bank of the river as far as Silla; then, his funds being nearly exhausted, and the Moors becoming more numerous and more influential as he went on, he thought it best to return. This was a most fortunate determination, for had he gone on to Timbuctoo he would certainly have been either killed or enslaved. An old negro told him that when he first went to that city he took up his

lodgings at a sort of public inn, the landlord of which spread a mat on the floor and laid a rope upon it saying, 'If you are a Mussulman you are my friend, sit down; but if you are a Kafir you are my slave, and with this rope I will lead you to market.'

He returned towards the South and went up the river side as far as Bammakoo. He had some intention of passing through Kong to the Gold Coast, and this would have led him through a country which yet remains to be explored. However, he thought it best to go back to the Gambia; and this, indeed, was difficult enough. His cowries were spent, and he therefore had nothing left but his clothes and his horse. Even these were taken from him by some Foula bandits, who at first stripped him stark naked, but afterwards gave him back the worst of his two shirts, a pair of trowsers, and his hat, in the crown of which he kept his memoranda. After they were gone he sat for some time looking round him with amazement and terror. Whichever way he turned nothing offered but danger and difficulty. He saw himself in the midst of a vast wilderness, in the depth of the rainy season; naked and alone; surrounded by savage animals, and by men still more savage. He was five hundred miles from the nearest European settlement. All these circumstances crowded at once upon him, and his spirits began to fail. He considered his fate as certain, and that he had no alternative but to lie down and perish. The influence of religion, however, aided and supported him. He

was, indeed, a stranger in a strange land, yet he was still under the protecting eye of that Providence who has condescended to call himself the stranger's friend. At this moment, painful as his reflections were, the extraordinary beauty of a small moss in fructification caught his eye. From what trifling circumstances the mind will sometimes derive consolation! for though the whole plant was not larger than the top of one of his fingers, he could not contemplate the delicate conformation of its roots, leaves, and capsule without admiration. Can that Being (thought he) who planted, watered, and brought to perfection in this part of the world a thing which appears of so small importance, look with unconcern upon the situation and sufferings of creatures formed after his own image; surely not! Reflections like these would not allow him to despair. He started up and, disregarding both hunger and fatigue, travelled forwards, assured that relief was at hand; and he was not disappointed.[1]

And now poor Mungo Park, his discoveries being ended, began his long homeward march on foot, clothed in rags, and carrying a spear in his hand. He had to beg for every meal; in some of the towns he was received with kindness, while others closed their gates against him. There was a famine in the land, and women, emaciated with hunger, were selling their children for corn. He frequently suffered from fever, and

[1] I have related the foregoing narrative, as much as possible, in Mr. Park's own words.

under one attack was confined to his hut for several days. He heard the house-master remark to his wife that they were likely to find him an expensive guest, as in his sickly state they would be obliged for the sake of their good name to maintain him until he recovered or died.

In a town called Kamalia he met with a negro named Karfa Taura, who informed Park that he intended when the rains were over to take a coffle of slaves to Gambia. He said that Park had better wait and go with him, and that if he could eat the common victuals of the country he could have as much of them as he wanted, and a hut to sleep in; and that after he had been conducted in safety to the Gambia, he might make what return he thought proper. Park asked Karfa if he would be satisfied with the value of one prime slave: he replied in the affirmative, and ordered one of the huts to be swept for his guest's accommodation.

In the meantime Mr. Dickson had been appointed curator of the Garden of Experiment at that time attached to the British Museum. Paying it a visit early one morning he found that the gate had been left open all the night, and that a man had walked in and was strolling about the grounds. He went up to this intruder and found that it was Mungo Park, of whom nothing had been heard for years, and who had been given up as dead. He had reached the Gambia in safety and returned to England *viâ* the

West Indies in a trading vessel, and having arrived early in the morning he was waiting in the garden till the servants opened Mr. Dickson's house.

The excitement in London was immense, and the Sunday evenings at Sir Joseph's house in Soho Square were crowded with people of fashion anxious to get a glimpse of the explorer. Major Rennell, the famous geographer, at once went to work on Park's dead reckonings and memoranda. Bryan Edwards, the historian of the West Indies, and now the Secretary of the African Association, wrote a brief account of the traveller's adventures for private circulation. Park himself went home to Fowlshiels on the banks of the Yarrow, where one of his brothers had inherited his father's farm. He spent his mornings in hard work upon his narrative, and then coming to London passed it through the press. Again returning home he married the daughter of the surgeon to whom he had been apprenticed. We may imagine if we please that Mungo Park wooed her in his boyhood and won her with his fame, and that her name, though not mentioned in his book, was often in his heart, in the tent of Ali or by the waters of the Niger. But certain it is that he was not a domestic man. While his name was on everybody's lips, and his book in everybody's hands, he had become a surgeon in the country, and was thoroughly weary of his life. Walter Scott, who was sometimes his neighbour, called upon him one day, and not finding him at home, walked in search of him along the banks of the Yarrow, which

in that part is a romantic stream, running among rocks and forming deep eddies and pools. He found the traveller plunging large stones into the river, and watching with anxious attention the bubbles as they rose to the surface. On being asked by his friend why he persevered so long in this singular amusement, he replied that it was the way in which he used to ascertain the depth of a river in Africa before he ventured to cross it; judging whether the attempt would be safe by the time which the bubbles took to ascend. It was not then known that he had any thoughts of undertaking a second expedition; but this circumstance left no doubt in Mr. Scott's mind about the matter. In fact, Park soon announced his intention of going back to Africa; and when one of his nearest relations expostulated with him on the risk, he calmly replied that a few inglorious winters of country practice was a risk as great, and would tend as effectually to shorten life as the journey which he was about to undertake.

He had suggested to the Government, on his return, that a commercial and military station should be established at Segou. This was afterwards a favourite project of Faidherbe's, and may yet some day be carried out by the French. Mungo Park's proposal received serious attention; and, at all events, it was determined to equip an expedition to ascertain the course and termination of the Niger. Henceforth the explorations of Africa were conducted by Government, and immense sums of money were expended.

Park one day called on Walter Scott, who had taken a country house near Fowlshiels, and informed him that he was about to start to London, and thence to Africa, and had come to say 'Good-bye.' The next morning Scott accompanied him part of the way home, and they rode together over the wild chain of pastoral hills which divide the Yarrow and the Tweed. They arrived on the top of William-hope ridge, a lofty hill which overlooks the course of the Yarrow; and the autumnal mist, which floated heavily and slowly down the valley beneath them, presented to the poet's imagination a striking emblem of the troubled and uncertain prospect which Park's undertaking afforded. They came to the spot where it had been agreed that they should separate. A small ditch divided the moor from the road; and in going over it Park's horse stumbled and fell. 'I am afraid, Mungo,' said Scott, 'that is a bad omen;' to which Park answered, smiling, 'Freits follow those who look to them.'[1]

Five thousand pounds were placed at Park's disposal, and he started from Goree with forty white soldiers. When he reached the Niger at Bammakoo, three-fourths of these men had died.

He travelled, partly by land and partly by water, past Segou to a town called Sansanding. His men died fast. He sent his interpreter, Isaacs, with a handsome

[1] Thame luiks to freits my master dear,
Then freits will follow them.
Ballad of Edom O'Gordon.

present to the king, and obtained permission to build a boat and sail down the Niger. Taking a native canoe, he improved it into a two-masted boat, forty feet by six, and called it the 'Joliba;' he then sent Isaacs to the Gambia with his journals, and sailed down the stream. His companions were, Lieutenant Martyn and three English soldiers, one of whom soon afterwards died; three slaves, and a man named Amadi Fatouma, who agreed to go as far as Haoussa. This man relates that their canoe was frequently attacked, and that they killed great numbers of the natives; that in some places he, Amadi Fatouma, went on shore to buy provisions, but that no one else left the canoe; that when they arrived in Haoussa he parted from them, according to agreement; and that a chief, or king, being angry that the white men had passed without making him a present (although they had plenty), sent an armed force to Boussa, where the river is narrow, and attacked them; that, after resisting for some time, they sprang into the river and were drowned.

The fact of Mungo Park's death was doubted for a long time; and his son afterwards went to look for him, as Telemachus went in search of Ulysses, and died at a very short distance from Accra. The accounts collected by subsequent travellers confirmed the truth of Amadi's report. Park shot his way down the Niger, firing right and left at the natives, who crowded to the banks of the river, often without intentions of hostility. The prow of his vessel was furnished with an iron hook, like the *rostrum*

of the ancients; and guns were fitted to the sides of the 'Joliba.' He killed and wounded many of the Tuaricks, who attacked him in canoes. It must be confessed that Park's conduct was reckless and inhuman, and dims the lustre of his reputation. Upon his head must be the blood of Major Laing, who was the first European to reach Timbuctoo, near which town he was killed by a tribe of Tuaricks, in revenge for the slaughter inflicted upon them by *The Wild Beast*, as they called Mungo Park. Even when Barth visited that country, and encountered that same tribe, he ran no slight risk of being murdered; for one of the men whom Park had wounded was still alive, and it had not been forgotten how many had been killed.

Laing's papers were not recovered, and Timbuctoo remained a mystery till it was visited by Rene Caillié, in 1828. Caillié was a Frenchman of humble birth, who, by reading 'Robinson Crusoe,' was excited to the love of travel; he went out to Senegal, took up his abode among the Tawny Moors of the Sahara, adopted the Mahommedan garb and religion, and returned to St. Louis so altered in appearance that his most intimate friends took him for a Moor. Disappointed of assistance from the Governor, he went to Sierra Leone, where the English Governor gave him eighty pounds for purposes of exploration. He put on again the turban and the tobe, alleged himself to be an Arab, and, starting from the Nunez river, crossed the continent of Africa to Morocco *viâ* Timbuctoo. His description of that city

destroyed one of the popular illusions respecting Africa and its golden joys. 'I looked around me,' he says, 'and found that the sight before me did not answer my expectations. I had formed a totally different idea of the grandeur and wealth of Timbuctoo. The city presented at first view nothing but a mass of ill-looking houses built of earth. Nothing was to be seen in all directions but immense plains of sand of a yellowish white colour. The sky was a pale red as far as the horizon. All nature wore a dreary aspect, and the most profound silence prevailed—not even the warbling of a bird was to be heard. This mysterious city, which has been an object of curiosity for so many ages, and of whose population, civilisation, and trade with the Soudan, such exaggerated notions have prevailed, is situated in an immense plain of white sand, having no vegetation but stunted trees and shrubs, such as the *Mimosa ferruginea* which grows no higher than three or four feet.'

Timbuctoo is, in truth, a seaport, situated on the shores of the Dry Ocean, or the Sandy Sea. When Morocco was a civilised country, Timbuctoo shared its importance, became the market of gold-dust from Bambara and Bouré, and of salt dug up in slabs from the neighbouring mines of Toudeyni, in the Desert. The city could boast of public buildings, the ruins of which are yet to be seen, and produced scholars and authors of considerable note. With the decline of Morocco it also declined, and Kano became the commercial metropolis of the Soudan. Timbuctoo is a kind of Harar or

Bokhara; it has always been infected with the bigotry of the Moors. In the days of Caillié, it was ruled by the Tuaricks, who encircled the city with their camps, and levied tribute on the passing caravans. But now, according to Barth, the Foulas have driven the Tuaricks back into the Desert, and hold the town in their possession. These Puritans of Africa have made it even more religious than before, and inflict fines and floggings on those who fail in their regular attendance at the mosque.

Caillié received a pension and the cross for his marvellous journey, and in 1870 a monument was erected to his honour by the French Government on the banks of the Nunez. In England he was treated with much injustice by geographers and critics. But Barth has confirmed the accuracy of his descriptions as regards Timbuctoo; and, in fact, he is one of the most sober and faithful, though not one of the most agreeable, of writers.

Denham and Clapperton crossed the Desert from Tripoli *viâ* Fezzan to the great kingdom of Bornou, and discovered Lake Tchad. For the first time since the days of Leo Africanus, the information of an eye-witness was received from this extraordinary country. Here, in the heart of Africa, where it was supposed that only savages existed; here, in the land beyond the Desert, was revealed the existence of enormous cities, with weekly markets, at which a hundred thousand poople were sometimes assembled, and in which the cotton goods of Manchester, the red cloth of Saxony,

double-barrelled guns, raw silk, razors, tea and sugar, Nuremberg fancy ware, and writing-paper, were exposed for sale. Here negroes might be seen riding on horseback, clad in mail, while others studied Aristotle and Plato in Arabic translations. The most active intercourse was kept up with the Barbary states; cloths, sandals, and Korans, beautifully written, were exported to those countries; and legal suits in the Soudan were often decided on appeal by the Tripoli Ulemas, or Doctors of the Law.[1]

But the journeys of Caillié and Denham did not throw any light on the African problem of the day—the termination of the Niger. Mungo Park had settled an important point, namely, that the river flowed towards the east, and was entirely distinct from the Senegal and Gambia. But his journey rather increased, than otherwise, the curiosity of the public and the confusion of geographers. 'Since Park's discovery of the Joliba,' wrote a 'Quarterly Reviewer,' 'every point of the compass has been assumed for the ulterior course and direction of that river.' Some geographers believed that it joined the Nile, according to the ancients. Major Rennell assumed that it ran into a swamp. Park himself was of opinion that the Congo was its mouth; and, as is shown by a letter from Martyn, he held that belief at the moment of his starting on his voyage from Segou. In the midst of all these conjectures, a German

[1] Denham and Clapperton, Barth, Mohammed el Tounsy.

geographer, Reichard of Weimar, advanced the curious hypothesis that the Niger, after flowing for some distance towards the Nile, turned sharp round, passed through the Kong mountains or Ghauts of Western Africa, and emptied its waters in the Bight of Benin. He based this opinion upon the vast alluvial deposits existing in the swamps of the Oil Rivers, as they are called—Benin, Brass, the Nun, and New Calabar. This theory was at first rejected with unwonted accord and unanimity by all scientific men; and Mannert said it was contrary to Nature. However, it gradually gained ground, and was confirmed by an explorer, as will presently be seen. But first some other expeditions must be mentioned. Roentgen went in from Morocco, and was killed near Mogadore. Nicholls was sent to the New Calabar, which is actually one of the mouths of the Niger, but died three months after landing. The King of the River enquired if he had come from Mr. Wilberforce, and assured him that he would kill him if he had. Belzoni, the Egyptian excavator, made an attempt *vid* Benin, and died not far from the coast. A great expedition was sent from the Nunez, under Major Gray, and came to nought. Another expedition was sent to the Congo, under Tuckey, and nearly every one died. African travel became a mania which infected all enterprising minds. Leyden was nearly volunteering, but gave up the project, much to the relief of the Edinburgh coterie. Carsten Niebuhr, the Arabian explorer, had similar intentions, but remained at home and produced

an historian. Burckhardt's famous tour in Syria, Nubia, and his pilgrimage to Mecca, were merely trips of preparation for a great African journey, and he died just as he was ready to begin. In 1825 Clapperton went in from Badagry, near Lagos, struck the Niger at Boussa, and went on to Sockatoo, the capital of the Foula Empire. But why, when he found the river, did he not descend it? He had a conviction, it appears, that whoever went down the river would be killed; but he could not expect to find the mouth of the river by travelling in an opposite direction. He died at Sockatoo, and his servant, Richard Lander, returned to the coast by another route.

Lander brought with him information which left little doubt that the Niger debouched into the Bight of Benin, and Government sent him out again to trace the stream down to the sea. Accompanied by his brother John, he travelled from Badagry to Boussa, where he found some books and guns belonging to Mungo Park; but the traveller's papers had disappeared.

Lander requested permission from the king to go down the river. The king said he must first consult the Dark Water, as they call the Niger. This was done with much solemnity and care, and the answer was favourable. The river promised to take care of the white men.

Even at Boussa it was not positively known where the Niger came to an end, for the Moslems had not penetrated far into the Delta: the natives did not invite

their trade, as they obtained all that they required from the ships; and the swamps were impregnable to the cavalry of the Foulas or Felatahs.

Whatever may have been the true story of Park's death at Boussa, it is certain that the Landers were kindly received by the king and his people. As they went down towards the river, to start upon their voyage, the Moslems lining the wayside fervently implored on their behalf the protection of Allah and the Prophet. The eyes of many were streaming with tears, and all saluted them and blessed them as they passed. They paddled down the river, and before long had sufficient proofs that it was taking them towards the ocean. One day they saw a cocoa-nut tree, a sure sign that they were approaching the coast; on another day a sea-gull flew over their heads. Next they observed that the people on the banks often wore European clothes; and once a man in a soldier's jacket called out from the banks, 'Hollo, you Englishman, you come here!'

One morning they perceived about fifty canoes coming up the river. These craft appeared to be very large, and full of men, and the appearance of them at a distance was very pleasing. They had each three long bamboo canes, with flags flying from them, one fixed at each end of the canoe, and one in the middle. In several the Union Jack waved on high, while other flags, which were white, had figures on them of a man's leg, chairs, tables, decanters, glasses, and all kinds of such devices. The people in them, who were very

numerous, were dressed in European clothing, with the trifling exception of trowsers, which might be worn only by kings, and for which pocket handkerchiefs were substituted.

Lander felt quite overjoyed at the sight of the English flags and of people in European clothes. But when the canoes came closer, he observed that they had certain curious raised platforms, also six-pounders in the bows, and that the natives were armed to the teeth. The foremost canoe being now close to them, some men mounted the platform, and covered Lander's canoe with their muskets, while other canoes swept up alongside, and with astonishing rapidity our hero found himself deprived of his luggage and various articles of personal apparel.

These people were the Eboes, and a grand palaver was afterwards held in a neighbouring town as to what should be done with the prisoners and their canoemen. There happened to be among these savages a few well-dressed Mahommedan priests, who had come there to trade. Although they themselves were strangers, they entered the council, and accused the people of cowardice and cruelty. Many times they turned to the Landers, and blessed them with compassionate faces and uplifted hands, exclaiming '*God is king!*' The Landers were taken to the King of Eboe, and were ransomed from him by King Boy of Brass, who was staying with the former. King Boy paid the King of Eboe goods to the value of twenty slaves; and Lander agreed to give a

'book' or bill for the amount, and in addition the value of fifteen slaves, that King Boy might be requited for his trouble. There was an English brig, called the 'Thomas,' lying in Brass river, and the natives placed so much faith in the character of the English, that no one doubted for a moment but that the captain would honour the bill.

In sorrow and weariness Park had discovered the Niger, and in captivity Lander discovered its mouth. King Boy, leaving John Lander and the canoemen in his own house, took Lander on board the English brig. The vessel was in a melancholy state. Four sailors had just died of fever; the remaining four were sick in their hammocks, and the captain appeared to be in the last stage of illness. But on Lander relating his story, and presenting the bill, with the remark that, as it was a government expedition, there was no risk in advancing the goods, the captain became vigorous with rage, made use of many offensive and shameful oaths, and declared that he would not advance a farthing. 'If you think,' said this interesting invalid, 'that you have a —— fool to deal with, you are mistaken. I'll not give a —— flint for your bill. I would not give you a —— for it.' Lander then asked King Boy to take him on to Bonny, and get the money there; but King Boy replied, 'No, no, dis captain no pay, Bonny captain no pay; I won't take you any further.' It was in vain that Lander told the captain he had a brother in King Boy's power. The mere mention of the bill brought up another vomit

of oaths and abuse. So King Boy returned with empty hands and anger in his heart.

John Lander was informed of this before he saw the king, and awaited his arrival with some little apprehension. He heard the monarch quarrelling with his women, and afterwards walking through their apartments. He entered Lander's room, and stood still. His dark eye was flashing with anger, whilst his upturned lip, which exposed his white teeth, quivered with passion. No face in the world could convey more forcibly to the mind the feeling of contempt and bitter scorn than the distorted visage of the king. It was dreadfully expressive. Drawing up the left angle of his mouth on a parallel with his eyes, he broke silence with a sneering, long-drawn 'Eh!' and almost choking with rage, he said, 'You are thief man; English captain no will! You told me when I took you from the Eboe country that he would be glad to see me, and give me plenty of beef and rum. I got neither one nor the other. Eh! English captain no will. I gave you a quantity of goods to free you from slavery. I took you into my own canoe. You were hungry, and I gave you yam and fish; you were almost naked, I was sorry to see you so, because you were white men and strangers, and I gave each of you a red cap and a silk handkerchief. But you are no good—you are thief man. Eh! English captain no will; he no will. You also told me your countrymen would do this (taking off his cap, and flourishing it in circles over his head), and cry "Hurra! hurra!" when I

came on board their vessel. You promised my wife a necklace, and my father four bars. But eh! English captain no will; I tell you he no will. Yes, I will satisfy your hunger with plenty more of my fish and yams, and your thirst will I quench with rum and palm-wine. Eh! you thief man, you are no good; English captain no will!' He then stamped on the ground, and gnashed at Lander with his teeth like a dog, and cursed him again and again.

However, after some days King Boy, hoping against hope, took John Lander and his people on board the brig. The captain would not relent. The brothers scraped together all the little property they had left, and gave it to the king. It was not worth much; and Boy called one of his men, to show him what had been imposed upon him instead of his bars; then both of them turned away with scorn and indignation, and would not speak or even look at the Landers again. However, he was afterwards repaid by Government, and poetical justice was administered to the captain of the brig. He offered the Landers a passage home from Fernando Po; but they had no desire to put themselves into his power again, and declined his offer—happily for them. He had not sailed more than a mile from the anchorage, when a large vessel, with raking masts, suddenly appeared from behind a part of the island, and made all sail in chase, firing guns at him, till at last he lay to. The brig 'Thomas' was never heard of again;

and it was generally believed that the stranger was a pirate, and that the benevolent captain had been made to 'walk the plank'—a method of execution not in those days entirely extinct.

The course and termination of the Niger had at last been ascertained. This river rises among the mountains at the back of Sierra Leone, inhabited by savage Pagan tribes, but soon flows forth into the broad calm breast of the plateau, with the walled cities of the Moslems on its banks. It then takes its Mandingo name of the Joliba, or Great River. Flowing towards the north-east, it passes two great towns, Segou and Jenné, and runs close by Timbuctoo. In this part of its course it is surrounded by extensive plains, and has, in fact, entered the Sahara, which it fertilises with its inundations. At Timbuctoo, changing its direction, it turns to the right, and flows towards the east, skirting the border of the Desert, and apparently intending to effect a junction with the Nile ; but on reaching the country of Haussa, the eccentric river, now called the Quorra (with many other appellations), again curves round, doubles back upon itself, flows towards the ocean near which it rose, passes through the latitude of the birth, and having thus described three-quarters of a circle, pours itself into the Bight of Benin. About two hundred miles from its mouth it receives an enormous tributary, called the Binué, the source of which is entirely unknown, but

which doubtless exists at no great distance from the sources of the rivers which feed the Nile from the west.

As soon as Lander returned to England, the enterprising Laird fitted out a steamer expedition, which was joined by Richard Lander, and it was found that the Niger could be navigated in the rainy season to a considerable distance from the sea. The natives of the Delta, as may be supposed, resisted the attempt to pass their towns, and Lander was killed in a skirmish. The attempts which have been made to establish settlements upon this river have not been attended with success; but every year steamers ascend to the confluence of the Quorra and Binué, and do a good trade. The country which lies beyond the Confluence is one of the largest cotton-growing areas in the world. Kano is its Manchester; and at present the people dress themselves. But when the Niger trade is once established, our cheap cotton goods will soon destroy the native industry, and the people will export their raw cotton, instead of weaving it themselves. The Niger plateau is also covered with the shea-butter or tallow tree of Park; and this unguent is said to be superior in value to palm-oil. The population of the Niger is immense, and possesses an oriental civilisation. It may, therefore, be affirmed that a great market for European goods has been opened up by those African explorers, whose lives and labours I have sketched.

The history of African exploration may be divided

into two epochs—that of the Niger and that of the Nile. The first epoch concludes with the Landers. Since then it is true that Laird, and Oldfield, and Baikie, have added much to our knowledge of the Lower River and the Binué. Barth spent three years among the negroes, went over the ground of Denham, visited Timbuctoo, and added to geography the intervening portion of the Niger, which Mungo Park had navigated, but which had never been described. Gerhard Rohlfs crossed the continent, *viâ* Lake Tchad, from Tripoli to Lagos. Nachtigal has been to Bornou, and Vogel perished in Wadai. But, after all, these magnificent journeys have added little to our knowledge of Soudan. The days of discovery in this part of Africa are over; the Niger has gone out of fashion, and the present generation has been interested only in the story of the Nile.

The Sources of the Nile are contained in the rain-clouds of the Equator, which pour themselves down on the forest-plateau, form into a thousand rivers, and finally collect in enormous lakes, the precise number and importance of which are yet to be determined. From Baker's Albert Nyanza—the most northerly in latitude, and lowest in level, of these inland seas—the Nile runs towards Europe, and plunges into the Sahara. From its great equatorial reservoirs it receives a sufficiency of water to maintain its existence throughout this land of fire, where all other rivers are speedily

extinguished. But the Nile not only flows through the Sahara; it also overflows the flat country lying near its mouth, and, casting mud on the surface of the sand, creates that meadow which is called Egypt.

Now this black mud does not come from the lands of the Equator; the waters of the Nile are clear, or *white*; and although the Lakes can keep the Nile alive in its journey through the Desert, they cannot make it overflow. Whence then proceed these rich soil-laden and redundant waters to the weary Nile?

On the right hand side of that flowing river, between its waters and the Red Sea, a cluster of mountains rises in the air. These are the Highlands of Ethiopia—the romantic Abyssinia, the Switzerland of Africa; and down these hilly slopes, at a certain season of the year, rush two noisy streams—the Blue or Black Nile, and the Atbara—which, stripping their country of its black upper soil, fall into the Nile, and bestow upon it such a wealth of water, that as soon as it escapes from the rocky walls which line its course in the Nubian Desert, it is forced to overflow.

Thus the Nile is created by the rainfall of the equator, and Egypt by the rainfall of the tropics. If the White Nile did not exist, the Black Nile would be nothing—it would perish in the sand. But if the Black Nile did not exist, the White Nile would be merely a barren river in a sandy plain, with some Arab encampments on its banks.

When the Hyksos or Bedouins conquered Egypt

and ruled it from a camp, the Pharaoh, with his family and court, fled across the Desert, and established the city of Meroe. The shepherd kings being afterwards expelled from Egypt, and the Pharaohs triumphantly restored, Ethiopia became a military province, which, in the days of Egyptian decline, obtained its independence, and even conquered for a time the Mother Land.

After the Persian conquest, Ethiopia was separated from Egypt, and fell into an African condition. In the third century the Abyssinians were converted to Christianity, and joined the Jacobite persuasion. The Patriarch of Alexandria, and afterwards of Cairo, became their Pope, and sent them their Aboona, or Archbishop, charging six thousand dollars for the same. This primate is not allowed to smoke, and one of his episcopal functions is to spit, by way of benediction, upon the clergy and the people.

In the middle ages it was rumoured that a great Christian king existed in some unknown country, and that his name was Prester John. At first he was supposed to be a king of the Tartars, or the Emperor of China, but afterwards the name was applied to the Negus of Abyssinia. Covilham, a Portuguese, was the first European to reach his court, where he was kindly received, but detained for life, according to the ancient law, that *no stranger shall be allowed to go out of Abyssinia.*

The Jesuits converted Ethiopia for a time, but were

afterwards expelled, and the country remained dark till it was revealed to the civilised world by a traveller whose name has become a proverb, and whose fame, undimmed by time, promises to become eternal.

James Bruce was the son of a Scotch laird, who sent him to Harrow, and afterwards into the wine trade. Bruce had a passion for languages, and during his travels on the continent in the way of business, he learnt French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian, kept up his Latin and Greek, collected Oriental MSS., made some progress in Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Ethiopic or Geez, and Arabic; which last language he afterwards mastered. He had also a taste for art, and was an excellent draughtsman. He investigated the antiquities of Rome, and made a catalogue of Italian paintings. When he came into his estate, on his father's death, he thought at first of retiring to the country; Lord Halifax however urged him not to bury himself alive, but to follow up Shaw's work in Barbary, and obtained him the consulate of Algiers. He discharged with courage and fidelity his duties at that pirate court, and only resigned his post in order to travel in the East and finally to search for the sources of the Nile.

In the course of his tour he was shipwrecked off Benghazi, made some fine drawings of Baalbec and Palmyra, studied medicine under the famous Dr. Russel at Aleppo, and at last arrived in Egypt, wearing the costume of the East. He procured letters of introduction from the Patriarch of Cairo to the priests of Abyssinia,

and proceeded to Gondar, the capital, where he was received with honour and distinction. He soon became the Alcibiades of Abyssinia, was honoured for his learning and medical skill, reputed as the best horseman and shot in the country, and admired as a dandy and a beau. He enjoyed many *bonnes fortunes*; which indeed is easy enough in Ethiopia, where the ladies are not prudes, and the husbands are not Othellos.

In course of time he was permitted to visit the sources of the Blue Nile; these consist of two or three fountains of different sizes, enclosed within mounds of earth by the natives, who hold them sacred, and sacrifice bullocks around them on holy days and festivals.

Bruce now desired to return to Europe; but the ancient law of the country, though not always enforced, was not yet obsolete, and the king found it impossible to part from so agreeable a guest. It was only when the health of the traveller gave way, and it was feared that he would die, which would bring ill-fortune to the land, that he was allowed to depart; but then he was made to take 'a very solemn oath' that he would return as soon as he was well.

Buffon met the great man at Marseilles, and they went to Paris together, where Bruce figured for a time in those *salons* which have become famous in the history of France. But his happiness and triumph were not unmingled with disaster. 'When he discovered the fountains of the Nile, he filled a gourd, and drank—*To Maria*; and now he found that the lady had married in his

absence. Nor did the course of glory run more smoothly than that of untrue love, for when he met Danville, the famous geographer, he was informed first, that a Jesuit, named Payz, had already discovered and described the sources of the Blue Nile; and secondly, that the Blue Nile was merely a tributary stream. In London he was laughed to scorn. His tales of the sword-hunters hamstringing elephants, and of the Abyssinians cutting live steaks from oxen and eating them raw, were universally disbelieved by the magnates of the literary coffee-houses and taverns, with Dr. Johnson at their head. George Selwyn made him the victim of a *mot*. There was not a hack in Grub Street who did not write a paragraph against him. 'The Surprising Travels and Adventures of the Baron Munchausen' were composed in his honour and dedicated to him; and Peter Pindar indited numerous satirical couplets, of which the following will suffice as an example—

> Nor have I been where men (what loss, alas!)
> Kill half a cow and turn the rest to grass.

Bruce retired to Scotland; but even there was not safe from insult. One day, when he was visiting at the house of a relation in East Lothian, a gentleman present bluntly observed, it was impossible that the natives of Abyssinia could eat raw meat! Bruce did not reply, but shortly afterwards left the room, and returned with a piece of raw beefsteak, peppered and salted in the Abyssinian fashion. 'You will eat that, or fight me,' he said. When the incredulous gentleman had finished the

beef, Bruce calmly observed, 'Now, sir, you will never again say it is *impossible!*'[1]

Many years passed before he brought out his book, which Horace Walpole defined as dull and dear. He took much interest in the early proceedings of the African Association, but died before the achievement of his countryman, Mungo Park. At a party which he gave, he observed an old lady going out, unattended, to her carriage. He hastened after her to offer his arm, missed his footing, fell down stairs, and never spoke again—a strange conclusion to his adventurous career.

From the death of Bruce, in 1794, till 1830, the Niger monopolised African geography. But when Lander had discovered the mouth of that river, the African Association was dissolved, or rather embodied itself within the Geographical Society.

This potent and honourable body, of which, with all its defects, our country has reason to be proud, will be associated for many years to come with the name of Sir Roderick Murchison, who may be regarded as a continuation of Sir Joseph Banks. There was certainly much in common between these two celebrated baronets. Both were men of fortune, yet true devotees of science,

[1] To eat raw flesh is a custom in Abyssinia; but to cut live steaks from oxen is only practised in cases of emergency, that is, when people are hungry, and have an ox which they do not wish to kill. Mr. Mansfield Parkyns does not doubt that Bruce actually saw what he described. Diodorus Siculus describes the Ethiopians hamstringing the elephant and feasting from the body of the animal as it lay living but helpless on the ground.

—Banks as a botanist, and Murchison as a geologist. The former, without knowing anything of mathematics, ruled over the Royal Society forty-one years, seated in the chair of Newton, and, though often reviled as an amateur, it was he who first made the F.R.S. a diploma of scientific worth. The latter, without knowing anything of geography, governed for a shorter period of time, but with not less despotic sway, the Geographical Society, and raised it to wealth, honour, and fashion. No man of science could hope to be elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, unless first introduced to Sir Joseph, inspected and approved. No distant traveller could be praised, or his letters fairly brought before the public, if he had incurred Sir Roderick's displeasure. Sir Joseph was the friend and correspondent of many African travellers, especially of Mungo Park. Sir Roderick was the friend and correspondent of many African travellers, especially of David Livingstone. Murchison was a courteous and dignified foe, a faithful and warm-hearted friend, and, in spite of his little foibles, his weakness for rank and title, his passion for newspaper notoriety, and his bland facility for suppressing facts which were hostile to his fancies, he will ever be remembered by his associates with esteem, and almost with affection.

We now arrive at the epoch of the Nile, in which Sir Roderick and the Geographical Society played the same part which Sir Joseph and the African Association had already performed in the epoch of the Niger.

The commencement of White Nile exploration is

somewhat obscure. Mehemet Ali conquered countries in Soudan, founded Khartoum, and formed regiments of negroes. Cailliaud and Werne accompanied these expeditions. Petherick, and other ivory traders, opened up new lands for commerce. An Austrian Catholic mission was established at Gondokoro; and Miss Tinné was the first to navigate a steamer to that distant point. Gondokoro was long the terminus of exploration; the jealousy of the slave-hunters, and the hostility of the slave-hunted, made further ingress apparently impossible, and Central Africa was entered by a side-door.

Dr. Beke, who had travelled in Abyssinia, claims to be the first who suggested that the Nile sources might be discovered by a search inland from the neighbourhood of Zanzibar; but the exploration of Eastern Africa was first commenced by the Geographical Society, in consequence of the Mombas Mission Map. Messrs. Krapf and Rebmann, who were stationed at Mombas, in the service of the Church Missionary Society, made several journeys into the unknown interior, and discovered the snow-topped mountains of Kenia and Kilimandjaro; the latter of which was afterwards ascended by the Baron Van der Decken, and still more recently by the Reverend Mr. New. The Mombas missionaries also heard of an enormous lake in the centre of Africa, and sent to the Geographical Society a map, in which this inland sea was portrayed.

The Geographical Society resolved to send an expedition in search of the lake, and Lieutenant Burton, of

the Bombay army, was appointed to conduct it. Burton had distinguished himself in the early part of his Indian career by his intense application to linguistic studies, and was not less various in his accomplishments than Bruce himself. He mastered the lore of the Sufi's, and the art of fence, and obtained a diploma as Dervish, and a brevet as Maître d'Armes. In 1853, being then thirty-three years of age, he accomplished an extraordinary enterprise, which at once made his name a household word in India and the East. Disguised in Oriental garb, he took his passage to Alexandria in the P. and O., kept a shop at Cairo for some little time, selling sweetmeats and drugs, and then, joining the annual caravan, made the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, as Burckhardt had done before him. He complied with all the customary rites, entered the town bare-headed, permitted vermin to dwell upon him (it being forbidden to kill aught within the limits of the Sacred Land), drank of the waters of Zem-zem, kissed the Black Stone, and pelted the Devil in the valley of Mina. At Medina he viewed the Prophet's tomb; and on his return to England published a work, the value of which will be increased by time.

The system of travelling under false pretences is uncongenial to English ideas, and has recently been much condemned. Certainly, if a traveller assumes a disguise, he must act in the spirit of that disguise; and as Arabs never conduct philosophical investigations, and are blind to the beauty of statistics, it follows, as a

matter of course, that the traveller is precluded from seeking as much information as he could at least endeavour to obtain if he wore a European dress. But, on the other hand, it is better that a town or country should be visited by persons in disguise, than that they should not be visited at all. The Bokhara, described by Vambéry, no longer exists; and had he not resided within it in disguise, we should have lost a curious and interesting work. Caillié, with the small means at his disposal, could not have reached Timbuctoo except in Moslem disguise. Barth was protected by powerful friends in that Puritan city, which so closely resembles the Bokhara of the past; but even he was obliged to call himself a Mahommedan, in order to pass through some fanatical Tuarick tribes. And finally, as regards Mecca and Medina, no infidels ever are admitted; therefore, had not Burckhardt and Burton put on sheep's clothing, told an infinity of lies, mumbled false prayers on rosaries, and pounded the Arabian soil with their foreheads, those interesting cities would to this day have remained entirely unknown. The time is at hand when a frock coat and pantaloons will be the traveller's best protection in the most dangerous parts of the world; but, in the meantime, it need not be feared that the 'dervish dodge,' as Mr. Palgrave[1] calls it, will ever be carried to excess. There are not so very many

[1] Mr. Palgrave says in his 'Travels in Arabia,' i. 259: 'To feign a religion which the adventurer himself does not believe, to perform with scrupulous exactitude, as of the highest and holiest import, practices which

Europeans with sufficient knowledge to speak an Oriental language like a native, or with sufficient endurance to pass months in dirt and devotion, chastity and rags.

Burton's next proceeding was to intrude himself into Harar, in North-eastern Africa, also an exclusive city. He considers this the most dangerous of all his undertakings. On the shores of the Red Sea he met Lieutenant Speke, who had explored, as a sportsman, some rough regions in the Himalayas, and who was seeking to kill strange beasts for the adornment of his father's hall in Somersetshire. They travelled together among the Somaulis, were attacked one night by that fierce people, and narrowly escaped, Speke receiving eleven wounds. When Burton was made commander of the great Zanzibar expedition, he obtained permission for Speke to go with him; and now commences the story of the Sources of the Nile.

The east coast of Africa resembles the west coast, with its alluvial seaboard belt of virgin forest, mangrove swamps, and small unnavigable rivers—with its range of Ghauts or Kong mountains—and with its vast inner plateau, sometimes dry and desert, sometimes marshy and lacustrine. But while the Portuguese discoverers

he inwardly ridicules . . . All this seems hardly compatible with the character of a European gentleman, let alone that of a Christian.'

In his 'Essay on Eastern Questions,' p. 126, the same Mr. Palgrave says, 'I have been twice myself invested (for the nonce) with the character and duties of Imam, and as such have conducted the customary congregational worship . . . I was in their eyes a Moslem,' &c.

only encountered, on the Guinea coast, naked savages, paddling hollow trees and dwelling in miserable huts, they found, on the eastern side, large Arab towns, with stone houses embowered in groves of the orange and the lime; an active trade being carried on with Indians at the period of the monsoons; and the waters of the ocean whitened with cotton sails.

The Indian Ocean was in fact a basin of commerce when the waters of the Mediterranean were desolate and bare. The Chinese were once a great maritime nation, and discovered America; at least, so they say.[1] In their vast junks, which were sometimes sheathed with iron,[2] they opened up the spice trade of the Indian Archipelago, doubled Cape Comorin, ascended the coast of Malabar, and sailed even as far as the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. Chinese bottles have been found in the Egyptian tombs,[3] and even at a comparatively recent date the junks were seen in the Indian harbours, their large wooden anchors dangling from their bows.

It is probably from these people that the Chaldeans of Babylon, the Arabs of Yemen, and the Indians of Guzerat acquired the arts of shipbuilding and navigation. It is certain that in very ancient times a sea-trade was carried on between the coasts of Africa and India. The ships of Solomon, Hiram, and Co., returned from these southern waters with peacocks and gold. The peacocks could only have been obtained from

[1] See Galvano's 'Discoveries of the World,' p. 19 (Hakluyt Society). A very curious passage.

[2] Purchas, vol. i. lib. 4. [3] Wilkinson.

India; the gold could only have been brought from Africa, for the Indians have always imported but never exported the precious metal. In the days of the Ptolemies, the Arabs of Yemen conducted the Indian trade, and were the Dutch of the Indian Ocean; but the Romans destroyed Aden, and the Greeks of Alexandria, who had already discovered the monsoons, carried on the trade in their own vessels. When the religion of Mahommed arose, and the empire of the Caliphs was established, the Arabs again ruled the waters of *The Green Sea*, and some exiles from Oman colonised various cities on the eastern coast of Africa, and also the island of Zanzibar.

Vasco de Gama and Albuquerque made the Indian Ocean a Portuguese lake, on which no dhow could sail without a passport from the Indian viceroy or his subordinate officials; but the Arabs afterwards reconquered the coast north of Cape Delgado. The sultan of Zanzibar rules over this region, and claims sovereignty far into the interior, where the Arab travelling merchants dwell in fortified towns. But Eastern Africa has not been Moslemised like the country of the Niger; the government wages no religious wars; the merchants do not attempt to convert the negroes to the faith; partly, perhaps, because they are all slave-traders, and it is forbidden to enslave the true believer. These Arab merchants, however, have done good service to the cause of exploration by opening up caravan routes to Lake Tanganyika; it was by these that Burton and Speke travelled to the shores of that distant lake.

On their return journey, Burton invalided at Taborah or Kazeh, an Arab settlement between Tanganyika and the coast, and despatched Speke to seek for another great lake which was reported to the north. Thus the Victoria Nyanza was discovered, and Speke declared when he returned to Kazeh that he had found the head-waters of the Nile. Burton rejected this theory, which is at least partially true; but it was approved by the Geographical Society, and Speke, accompanied by Grant, went out again to the Lake Regions, and crossed the continent from Zanzibar to Alexandria. They arrived at Gondokoro, exhausted by fever and reduced to poverty by the avarice of native chiefs. Miss Tinné[1] had been to Gondokoro in her steamer, and was searching for them in the upper tributary streams; during which voyage she was forced to burn her cabin furniture for fuel. However, they met at Gondokoro, a Mr. Samuel Baker, author of the 'Rifle and Hound in Ceylon,' who, with his young and pretty wife, were just about to start for the interior, also to look for the sources of the Nile. Baker relieved with an open hand the necessities of Speke and Grant, and gave them his sincere congratulations. At the same time he could not but feel somewhat disheartened and depressed. He had passed a twelvemonth in Abyssinia,

[1] This lady, who possessed a true love of exploration, started from Tripoli for Timbuctoo, and was murdered by the Tuaricks near Mourzuk. She fell a victim to the reputation of her wealth, for the Tuaricks supposed that her iron water-tanks were filled with gold.

learning Arabic, and preparing himself for this undertaking, and now he supposed that there was nothing left for him to do. But Speke cheered him with the assurance that a great discovery was still to be made, for he had heard of another inland sea, which he had wished himself to reach, but had been prevented by a war. Mr. Baker and his wife determined to find this lake, and, joining a company of Egyptian slave-hunters, passed through the difficult districts immediately south of Gondokoro; finally, after great dangers and privations, they reached the shores of the Albert Nyanza, for which they claim at the least an equal importance with the Victoria Nyanza, in forming the head-waters of the Nile.

But now another African traveller, greater than Burton, greater than Speke, greater than Baker, appears upon the scene, and discovers new lakes, and declares that the true sources of the Nile exist far to the south of the Nyanzas.

Combine Moffat and Mungo Park and the result would resemble DAVID LIVINGSTONE. The long and arduous years which he spent as a missionary at Koloberg entitle him to our esteem, and as an explorer he stands entirely alone. Other travellers, eminent as they may be, have merely made campaigns in Africa; but Livingstone has passed his life in that country; he speaks English with a strong Sichuana brogue: and only twice in his life since he was a youth has visited England, returning after a while to his true home in

the wilderness with his health shattered by the toils of literary composition.

Livingstone began life as an artisan, and at the age of ten was put into a factory as 'piecer;' his working hours were from six in the morning till eight at night, with intervals for breakfast and dinner. He went to evening school from eight to ten, after which hour he used to read by himself till his mother snatched the book from his hands and sent him off to bed. Out of his first week's wages he bought Ruddiman's 'Rudiments of Latin,' and at nineteen, promoted to a 'spinster,' he used always to put a book on the spinning jenny and read it as he worked. He devoured all kinds of books except novels and works of theology, and the last flogging his father gave him was on account of his obstinate refusal to read Wilberforce's 'Practical Christianity.' However, he was afterwards delighted with the works of Dr. Thomas Dick — 'Philosophy of Religion,' and 'Philosophy of a Future State.'

His religious feelings were now awakened, and 'in the glow of love,' which Christianity inspires, he resolved 'to devote his life to the alleviation of human misery.' It was his intention to study medicine, and then to go out as a missionary to China.

He attended medical classes at Glasgow, and was admitted a Licentiate of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons. But the Opium War having closed China, the fame of Moffat turned him towards South Africa. He entered the service of the London Mission-

ary Society, and in 1840 embarked for the Cape, and went up at once to Kuruman, where Moffat's station had been established about thirty years before.

The South African Plateau commences underneath the parallel 20° South. It is built of granite, and raised to a considerable height above the level of the sea; while its base is washed by furious and lofty waves continually raised to turbulence by gales of wind. The greater part of this region lies outside the Tropic of Capricorn, and though the heat is often intense, snow falls in certain parts of the interior. Here and there a moist valley produces the African fever; but the climate, on the whole, is superb, and chronic diseases vanish from the resident. South Africa lies in the latitude of Australia, and resembles that country in many respects. We find the same sandy deserts; the same rivers, fierce and foaming in the rains, and dry watercourses in the summer; the same wool-producing pastures and mineral-abounding hills. But while Australia offers nothing to the sportsman but kangaroos and dingoes or wild dogs, the South African plateau is one of Nature's best preserves.

Sometimes the wide and withered plains are covered for miles with the springbok migrating, and the air seems alive with their quivering horns; these moving herds are variegated with zebras and giraffes, and lions run in among them like dogs in a pack of sheep. The pools are trodden all around like a village horsepond in England, and the ivory hunter, digging a hole near

the water, lies down inside to await his prey. The sun sinks beneath the rim of heaven; the cry of the ostrich ceases; in the distance may be heard the roaring of the lion; and now from all quarters the hunter observes dusky and uncouth forms drawing near to the water, and animals of many kinds drinking each in a manner of its own. But still the *one* of which he is in quest has not appeared; he remains silent, and with his head peering from his hole watches with curiosity the habits of the beasts around. The moon rises in the sky and lights up the rocks, which are formed in the image of castles and cathedrals; at a little distance is a grove of thorns to which he often gives an impatient glance, like a lover who waits near the house of his mistress and gazes at the window or the door. Presently he starts, his cheeks flush, and his hand flies to the huge gun which is lying by his side. Symptoms of uneasiness appear among the animals that are drinking at the pool. The giraffe begins to sway its long neck to and fro; the zebra utters subdued and plaintive cries; the gnu glides away with a noiseless step; even the ponderous and quarrelsome black rhinoceros goes off a little way, then turns and listens, and finally departs, giving vent to its fear and rage in vicious and peculiar snorts.[1]

And now a great black mountain of moving flesh moves slowly towards the water, and stands motionless upon the brink, its form reflected in the shining pool.

[1] Andersson's 'Lake Ngami.'

A rustle of the clothes, a sigh, would be sufficient to scare the scout away; but it hears nothing, and gives a signal; the rest of the herd come out of the grove, and then entering the pool splash about in the water and give themselves shower-baths with their trunks. The hunter picks out the finest tusker and aims at it behind the ear. As he fires, it utters a shrill cry, and goes off with drooping trunk. The next morning the hunter takes his dogs and searches for the carcase in the mimosa grove.

The natives of this country are, firstly, the Bushmen, a pigmy race about four feet high, with bodies so obscenely and grotesquely formed that they cannot be described except in scientific publications. They live entirely by hunting, and when game is scarce dine upon grasshoppers. They also steal the cattle of the settlers and Caffres, and are shot down like the hyenas which they resemble in their habits. These people are not confined, as was at first supposed, to the South African Plateau. It can scarcely be doubted that they are the true aborigines of Africa, and that the negroes have driven them into a corner of the continent; as the Celts and Germans drove the dwarfish Finns to the upper parts of Europe, and the Red Indians drove the dwarfish Esquimaux into the Arctic circle. But a few tribes of Bushmen are still found in the recesses of inner Africa, as the aborigines of India still exist in the hills of the Deccan. These isolated Bushmen, called pigmies or dwarfs by the

negroes, are mentioned by Battel in his account of Loango; Du Chaillu found them inland of the Fernand Vaz; Krapf saw one upon the Eastern Coast; and Schweinfurth had one in his possession on the Upper Nile.

The Hottentots appear to be Bushmen in a more elevated state, tending cattle, but never tilling the ground; and as for the Caffres, they are merely a branch of the great Bechuana tribe,[1] and the Bechuanas are certainly a negro race. It has been asserted by many ethnologists that the Caffres are different from the negroes; but that supposition I believe to be erroneous. Never yet have I seen the portrait of a Caffre, Bechuana, &c., which did not remind me of some negro I had seen in Western Africa. In character and customs the Bechuanas differ in no respect from the negroes. The history of their lives is precisely the same—always keeping cattle when permitted by the tsetse, but likewise always tilling the ground; selling their daughters to husbands, trying witches by ordeal, making long palavers, eloquent in speech, subtle in argument, detaining strangers, eager for trade; such are the Bechuanas and such are the negroes. In both the prevailing colour is bronze; the hair is always woolly, the nostrils are always expanded, and the forehead is always rounded in the centre. But among the negroes, as among the Caffres, the hands and feet are often small, and the calf of the leg fully curved, the nose aquiline, and

[1] Moffat.

the lips thin, and the cast of features sometimes almost European. It is probable enough that the Caffres on an average are a finer people than the negroes of West Africa; but surely that might be expected since they have wandered from Central Africa into a healthy climate, and beyond the limits of the tropics.

Let us now return to Livingstone, who, shortly after his arrival, cut himself off from all the delights of society at Kuruman, and retired for six months to the wilderness that he might learn the language of the Bechuanas. He afterwards married Mr. Moffat's daughter, and founded the station Kolobeng far away inland. In such a country the missionary must be a Jack of all trades, and his wife a servant of all work. Under the tuition of his father-in-law he had already learnt something of carpentering and gardening; a native smith taught him to weld iron; he became expert in the compound fractures of waggons, and in setting a tire of a wheel; he built a brick house, and in order to make the bricks, had to cut down a tree and saw the timber into moulds. His wife turned an ant-hill into an oven, with a slab of stone for the door, made soap out of wood-ashes, and manufactured candles.

As regards the missionary work, his success as a theologian may not have been great; but he must have succeeded among them as a man. 'Show kind attention,' he says, 'to the reckless opponents of Christianity on the bed of sickness and pain, and they never can be-

come your personal enemies. Here, if anywhere, love begets love.'

His affection and friendship for the natives got him into trouble with the Boers, or Dutch creole peasant farmers, who are descended from the original settlers of the country.

The Portuguese did not make use of the Cape of Good Hope as a half-way station to the Indies; for they found it more convenient to sail at once to Mozambique, and there to wait for the monsoon. The Dutch were the first to utilise the Cape, and at first used it only as a letter-box. When a ship was outward bound it entered Table Bay, and its mails were deposited on shore, beneath a pillar-post or stone; these letters were excavated by the captain who was homeward bound, and delivered to their address at Amsterdam.[1] The Cape was afterwards colonised by the Dutch, and girls were sent out from orphan houses and charitable foundations, that the settlers might not neglect that mandate for increase and multiplication, which, of all scriptural injunctions, has been the most faithfully obeyed.

While the harbour of Cape Town was useful to the ships of the East India Company for provisions and repairs, the Boers spread into the interior. Learning and the arts have not yet deprived these people of their primitive simplicity. Barrow observed a schoolmaster yoked with an ox to the plough, and driven by a Hottentot; and even at the present day, the doctrine that

[1] Koben.

the earth is round is a novel and startling heresy, which the clergy dare not announce from their pulpits.[1] The Boer sits all day with his pipe in his mouth, removing it only to welcome a guest, to drink a glass of 'Cape smoke,' or to eat his various and frequent meals. His wife sits all day with her naked feet on a perforated footstool filled with live charcoal, and a coffee-pot brewing at her side. Before dinner a girl comes in and washes the family and the guests all round. They eat dumplings and pieces of meat floating in a greasy soup; which diet fattens them exceedingly, the adipose tissue chiefly collecting in the same manner as it does with the Hottentots, and the sheep of the land. The Boers meet once a year at the nearest town, to take the Sacrament, to trade, and to marry their young people. Though not refined or intellectual, they would be a very estimable people, were it not for their treatment of the natives. They maintain that their own position is analogous to that of the Israelites in Canaan; that they are the chosen people of God, and that the heathen have been given them for an inheritance. Their war-policy is regulated by the instructions revealed to the Hebrew warriors in Deuteronomy xx. 10-14. They act indeed much in the manner of their worthy prototypes, robbing and butchering the natives, and never attempting to convert them. They do not even admit their Hottentot servants to family prayers; as if they

[1] Mackenzie's 'Ten Years North of the Orange River,' p. 51.

supposed that God cared only for Dutchmen, as in former times He was supposed to care only for Jews.

When the English took the Cape and deprived them of their slaves, this pious people performed an Exodus, and occupied a land flowing with milk and honey, belonging to the Bechuanas. Dr. Livingstone's parishioners excited their hostility, and he was regarded as a Balaam, or false prophet. They attacked his settlement in his absence, carried off two hundred of his school children into slavery, plundered his house, and destroyed his library—the solace of his solitude. When he came home, he found that his furniture and clothes had been taken as an inheritance; that his medicine bottles were smashed to pieces, and that his books were scattered and torn.

The fact is, that the Boers were afraid that this English missionary would open up the country to English trade; but by their violent proceedings they left him free to carry out his projects of research and exploration. Accompanied by Messrs. Oswell and Murray, he crossed the Great Kalahari Desert, which hitherto had hindered the progress of travellers, and discovered Lake Ngami on the other side. This was his first great journey.

As it was evident the Boers would not permit the Kolobeng mission to be established again; and as the region of Lake Ngami, the border-land of Central Africa, was too unhealthy for a station, he determined to take his family to the Cape, and then to return to the interior,

and to seek beyond Ngami and the banks of the Zambesi a healthy region where he might plant a missionary settlement. This region he never discovered; for throughout Central Africa the fever everywhere prevails. But he made, as will be seen, the greatest exploring journey that had ever been achieved.

He waggoned it down to the Cape, placed his wife and children in the care of friends, took lessons in astronomy from Mr. Maclear at the Observatory, waggoned it back again to Lake Ngami, took up his abode with the Makololo tribe, learnt their language, acquired the friendship of their chief, and then offered, if he, the chief would give him men, to open up a road to the Portuguese possessions on the west coast, by which means the Makololo would obtain a market for their ivory. The chief placed twenty-seven men at his disposal, and he prepared to start.

Nothing can better illustrate the character of Livingstone than this arrangement with the Makololo. Here, in the centre of Africa, was a savage, war-making people, who had never seen a European, and who probably supposed that white men had tails, and lived under the water, and dined upon negroes. Livingstone comes among them, and is at first received with some little distrust; but in course of time so completely wins their confidence and their esteem, that a number of free and independent citizens consent to go with him to the country of the white man; although they know that he could there sell them, if he chose, and although neither

he nor they are acquainted with the land and people through which they have to pass. Their chief anxiety, it seems, was on his account, and their chief dread that they might lose their good name. 'In the event of your death,' said they, 'will not the white people blame us for having allowed you to go away into an unhealthy unknown country of enemies?' Livingstone reassured them on this point, and then, in his narrative, proceeds to say: 'The prospect of passing away from this fair and beautiful world thus came before me in a pretty plain matter-of-fact form; and it did seem a serious thing to leave wife and children—to break up all connection with earth, and enter on an untried state of existence; and I find myself in my journal pondering over that fearful migration which lands us in eternity; wondering whether an angel will soothe the fluttering soul, sadly flurried, as it must be, on entering the spirit world; and hoping that Jesus might speak but one word of peace, for that would establish in the bosom an everlasting calm. But as I have always believed that if we serve God at all, it ought to be done in a manly way, I wrote to my brother, commending my little girl to his care, as I was determined to succeed or perish in the attempt to open up this part of Africa. The Boers, by taking possession of all my goods, had saved me the trouble of making a will; and, considering the light heart that now leapt in my bosom, and some faint efforts to perform the duty of Christian forgiveness, I felt that it was better to be the plundered party than one of the plunderers.'

This brave and good man, attended by his faithful Makololo, then worked his way with infinite difficulty through savage tribes to the Portuguese possessions; he was received by Mr. Gabriel at San Paolo de Loanda, and remained with him seven months. He then returned to the country from which he came, and, instead of striking southward to the Cape, continued straight on to the East, discovered the African Niagara, which he named the Victoria Falls, and descended the Zambesi to the sea, having thus crossed Africa from West to East.

He returned to England in 1856, having been absent sixteen years. In 1858 he was entrusted with the charge of a Government steamer expedition, went up the Zambesi and other rivers, and assisted to establish the Universities Mission on the highlands of the interior. This Mission was composed of splendid human materials. It is impossible to read the melancholy narrative of Rowley without perceiving that Bishop Mackenzie and his companions were men of gold. But the climate killed them, one by one, and the Mission was abandoned. The fact is, that Central Africa, except within the southern plateau, is not fit for white men to live in; the miserable dwellings, the meagre and unwholesome food, the isolation from civilised life, the continual anxiety, the frequent disappointment, too faithfully combine with fever, dysentery, and other diseases of the soil. It is one thing to travel in Africa; it is another to settle down for life in miasma and monotony amongst a people who anxiously inquire of the missionary how much tobacco

he will give them if they consent to be baptized, and who believe that he has arranged with the white man's god to receive a commission on their souls.

The Zambesi expedition lasted six years, and Dr. Livingstone was then recalled. For some time he saw no prospect of visiting Africa again, and used facetiously to talk about taking to a 'pike.' However, he obtained the nominal post of consul to Central Africa, without salary from Government; but only the sum of five hundred pounds. Happily he had private friends, who placed large sums at his disposal, and thus he was enabled to start for the interior on a pure exploring expedition. He had not long been absent, when some of his men appeared on the coast, and announced that he was dead. A Search Expedition was despatched upon his trail, and ascertained that he was alive, and that the men were runaways. The noblest of motives prompted the sending of this expedition, and therefore it should not be harshly condemned. But, nevertheless, it was money thrown away. No one supposed that Livingstone had been detained. Either he was dead, or had proceeded on his journey. In the former case he could not be assisted; in the latter case he could not be overtaken, and in course of time letters would arrive (as they did) to say where he was.

From time to time letters came to Zanzibar from Livingstone, and stores were sent up to him by the English consul. It was known that he had reached Ujiji, a town on the shores of the Tanganyika Lake,

and that he had gone to explore the unknown regions west of that lake. Then came an interval of silence. Months and months passed by; no letters were received; and the Arab traders who came down from Ujiji to the coast brought rumours of his death.

Now was the proper time to send an expedition. There was reason to believe that the goods despatched from the coast had not arrived in his hands. If so, he was probably in a dilemma; for people cannot travel moneyless in Africa, any more than they can travel moneyless in Europe. Every African village is an hotel, and the landlord, or king, must be paid for board and lodging; to say nothing of tribute for right of way. The money with which the East African traveller must pay his expenses consists of cloth, wire, and beads; men must be hired to carry these commodities, and to these men also wages must be paid. If, therefore, Livingstone had spent his goods, he could not continue his explorations; and possibly he might be detained for debt by some savage chief. A Search Expedition would not only relieve the anxiety of the public to learn his fate, but would also enable him to go on with his travels; or, if he preferred it, to return home.

Yet, strangely enough, Sir Roderick Murchison, a sincere friend of the absent man, would not organise such an expedition, firmly believing that the Doctor's wants could best be relieved by means of native carriers, despatched with goods to the interior. It was not till

after Sir Roderick's death that the council of the Geographical Society was able to equip an expedition.

In the meantime, however, another man was before them in the field. American papers, in point of literary workmanship, editorial dignity, and influence with the public, are inferior to those of our large provincial towns; but surpass even the journals of London in their enterprise for collecting news. The editor of the 'New York Herald,' Mr. James Gordon Bennett, junior, remarking what interest was felt in both hemispheres in the fate of Dr. Livingstone, authorised one of his correspondents, who, though young in years was old in travel, to go and look for the absent explorer; placing funds *ad libitum* at his disposal. Mr. Stanley proceeded to Zanzibar, purchased goods, hired carriers, and set out for the interior. The first point he had to make was Ujiji, on the Lake Tanganyika. Burton and Speke had been before him; and though the journey in any case must have been troublesome and tedious, still it was not new ground, and the Arab traders were always travelling to and fro. But when he arrived at the Arab settlement Taborah, or Kazeh, an unexpected obstacle arose. Mirambo, a native chieftain, *cut the road*. The Arabs went to war, Mr. Stanley joined them, and Mirambo was victorious. News arrived on the coast, and afterwards in England, that Mr. Stanley had been stopped; and also that he was very dangerously ill. The Geographical Society thereupon very properly proceeded with the Relief and Search Expedition. But Stanley was not a man to be

easily turned back. He formed 'a flying caravan,' dashed headlong into the bush, *went round the war*, as the natives say, opened up a road of his own, and safely arrived at Ujiji, to which Livingstone had just returned from his journey to the west.

The Doctor was almost penniless; he was exhausted by disease; a thousand pounds worth of goods, sent up to him from Zanzibar, had been embezzled by the Arabs and the natives; his letters to the coast had been again and again destroyed. His position, therefore, was desperate. Without money, or armed men, he could not have reached Zanzibar, on account of the Mirambo war. He would, therefore, have been forced to remain inactive, and to be inactive in Africa is like sleeping in the snow—it is death.

The arrival of the gallant American is best described by Livingstone himself:—'A vague rumour,' he says, 'reached Ujiji, in the beginning of last month, that an Englishman had come to Unanyembe, with boats, horses, men, and goods in abundance. It was in vain to conjecture who this could be; and my eager inquiries were met by answers so contradictory, that I began to doubt if any stranger had come at all. But one day, I cannot say which, for I was three weeks too fast in my reckoning, my man, Susi, came dashing up in great excitement, and gasped out, "An Englishman coming—see him!" and off he ran to meet him. The American flag at the head of a caravan told me the nationality of the stranger. It was Henry M. Stanley, the travelling

correspondent of the "New York Herald," sent by the son of the editor, James Gordon Bennett, junior, at an expense of 4,000*l.*, to obtain correct information about me, if living; and if dead, to bring home my bones. The kindness was extreme, and made my whole frame thrill with excitement and gratitude.'[1]

With this romantic meeting, the history of African exploration is concluded for the present; but Livingstone is still at work, and Baker Pacha in the midst of a campaign. An expedition has been sent to the Congo, and another to the Victoria Nyanza; while in Germany an African Association has been formed. It is certain that for many years to come Central Africa will maintain its geographical pre-eminence. We may hope to hear more of the dwarfish aborigines; of people living in caves and burrowing underground; of cannibals eating their prisoners of war. New lakes, mountain ranges, and rivers, will be described; the water-partings of the Nile, Binué, and Congo, will be correctly laid down upon the maps; and in the great central forest-plateau other species of the genus gorilla will probably be found. But it is doubtful whether anything of a startling and sensational description remains to be discovered. The heroic age of African travel is drawing to a close, and the days are already past when every journal of exploration was devoured as soon as it was offered to the public. Future travellers in Africa will be placed under

[1] Dr. Livingstone to Earl Granville. Ujiji, December 18, 1871.

the same conditions as those who relate their adventures in China, New Guinea, and Brazil. Their books, to attain popularity, must be composed with literary skill, or stored with scientific observations; they must either belong to the school of Chateaubriand and Lamartine, Warburton and Kinglake, or to that of Humboldt, Darwin, Hooker, Wallace, and Bates.

And now it may be asked, What has been the use of all this exploration? What has been purchased with the blood and the treasure expended on African soil? To this I reply, that owing to the travels of Park, Denham, Clapperton, and Lander, a new market has been opened to British manufactures; and that the Oriental slave-trade in negroes has been suppressed by two African explorers—Livingstone and Baker.

Bread and butcher's meat to thousands of women and children in England; life, peace, and security to thousands of women and children in Africa—such are the results of exploration.

When we remember that the earth was once a miserable wilderness, inhabited by savages, whose implements and weapons were chipped flints, or stakes hardened in the fire, it is surely not unreasonable to believe that the wastes of Africa will some day be reclaimed and colonised by civilized men; and it is certain that before a country can be improved, it must be known. But even if cold-hearted sceptics should deny that travellers act as the pioneers of progress, or should, perhaps, deride progress itself, then I would maintain that Adven-

ture is a moral agent; that noble deeds have always their utility; and that the career of a man like Livingstone radiates virtue throughout the world.

When the illusions of youth are departed; when the fancies that brightened the morning of existence have faded and vanished away; when we too plainly perceive that life, at the best, is insufficient, that our dearest hopes can never be realised, or having been realised cease to be hopes—what a melancholy languor at times falls upon us; what dull despair takes possession of our souls!

But if in these dreary and despondent hours we take up the biography of a self-made man, and read of his noble and persistent struggles, his fortitude, his patience, and his ultimate success, we are nerved and animated to our daily work. It matters not who the man may be, or what was the object of his life—all heroes are benefactors of the human race. The artisan in a London garret may derive strength and consolation from the story of an African explorer, as many a traveller in the weary waste has been supported by the memory of those who, at the desk or the workshop, in the parish and the pulpit, in the studio, the laboratory, or the gas-lighted office, have battled bravely with temptation or defeat, and remained true to the spirit of Duty, which the Unknown Power has placed within their hearts.

END OF FIRST VOLUME.

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